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In view of The Third World Zoroastrian Conference at Bombay this week, readers may find of interest the following by A. D. Gorwala, from the November 1974 issue of Parsiana.

L ATE at night the old man sat in his easychair on the long varandah, looking into the darkness. There was a frown upon his brow for he had been set a task which to him before that evening would have seemed quite unnecessary. The young of his religion, he was told, did not know what the religion was. They knew a great deal about other religions, about Christianity, about Islam, about Hinduism. But about their own religion, they, Zarthostis, children of Zarthosti parents, were at best very vague. Would he therefore explain it?

His feeling was, the true Zarthosti lives his religion, so that almost by osmosis Zarthosti children would have grapsed its essentials from the conduct and general behaviour of their parents and older relatives. What need could there be then of exposition? In any case, he was no scholar of the ancient languages; he could give no guidance on points of interpretation. His Zarthosti faith was very work-a-day. It had been throughout his long life the source both of inspiration and consolation. It had penetrated deep within him. He had felt no need, firmly settled in that, to seek strange gods. The question arose in his mind, can a man explain that which is nearer to him than his heart's blood? Can he convey its meaning in words?

He cast around for precedents. Who in the past, he wondered, had been obliged to explain the basic tenets of the faith to an unknowing, perhaps a hostile, audience? His mind came to rest on one name, Dastur Meherji, he whom the anonymous versifier of the time had characterised thus:

Meherji Rana
Extremely wise
Pearl beyond price
Called by Akbar Badshah
To his hall of discourse
He spoke so well and truly
So simply and pointedly
None could confuse him,
None could confute him.

Would that the great Dastur, the Dasture Dasturan, were here now, he wished fervently, and with a sigh, relaxed in his chair,

fourth, on a raised seat covered by a silk cushion, sat the Emperor, with below him on the right and left the statesmen, commanders and artists known commonly as his nine jewels. The discussion following on a speech had just ended for there was a hum of conversation in the air.

Suddenly the Emperor raised his hand and all fell silent. Said Akbar with his characteristic winning smile, "Greatly have we been enlightened about the nature of the religions all of you who come in delegations of three or more represent. Now I would hear from the one who comes by himself, yes, you sir, dressed all in white without a speck of colour in your garments. I have observed you for some days listening most attentively. Now your turn has come to speak."

Rose Meherji in his place, and having made deep obeisance, said, "Protector of the poor, I hear and obey. I come not with a train but by myself for the religion to which I have the high honour and privilege of belonging is now followed only by some thousands, mostly agriculturists. When your command came, summoning me to attend in this distant place, there was much discussion among us, should I come as would have become the representative of a faith, among whose millions of followers but a few hundred years ago, were numbered the rulers of half the world, or of one that the vicissitudes of time had shrunk to its present low magnitude. The conclusion, freely reached by the whole anjuman, was that an attempt at a pretence was contrary to our principles; that as we were, so should we appear before the greatest monarch of the time. Here then I am, and truly what I have to say is as simple as my appearance.

"We believe in one divine power whom we most often call Ahura Mazda, the Lord of Wisdom. In the world, there are both good and evil, and the conflict between them makes itself apparent in almost all hu man transactions and affairs. The Zarthosti's duty is to strive against the evil. He may succeed or he may not. If the latter, he must try again and again, remembering that the first of our prayers says "That is the highest virtue which is virtue for the sake of virtue alone.' To be disheartened, to give up, to abandon the fight for the good, we consider a sin, something to repent of and not to repeat. We serve the Good best by serving our fellow human beings, people of our own faith and people of other faiths. We consider cruelty a vice, consideration for others and charity great virtues. Truthtelling, forswearing the lie, is to us an essential element in the fight for Good and against Evil. From which it follows that a Zarthosti's word is sacred, not to be broken, however difficult the new circumstances. What we promise we must strive to do. A Zarthosti cannot have recourse to duplicity, double-dealing, cheating, fraud of any nature, deceit. He must be honest, straightforward, frank, prepared to speak out and act against wrong-doing, whoever the doer.

Justice and courage we count among the first weapons in the fight against evil. Industry, hard work are to us good, idleness, intemperance, greed, vices for which payment will have to be made at the final accounting. After death comes judgement, when a man's deeds speak for themselves, and lead him to salvation or otherwise. This then is the essence of my religion, Oh King of Kings, the religion of the good, that is one in which the good is the motivating principle, or the good religion, as some have termed it.

"I have been brief, considering the pressure on your Majesty's time, and I may in the process of compression have represented the religion as a stern, a joyless faith. Stern it certainly is in that as you do, so shall you be requited. But far is it from being joyless. Gaiety and laughter are part of being good, fighting for the good, and there are no fears inbuilt in it. The Zarthosti faces the world cheerfully, knowing his duty, and knowing if he does it, he need be afraid of nobody and nothing. We worship God, Great King, and fear no man. No spirit, no devil distresses us; we face it boldy if it appears, and soon, unable to trouble us, it departs,"

A FTER a few moments' silence the learned Abul Fazl looked at the Emperor and on his nodding, said, "You and your people are the same the deeds of whose ancestors the noble Firdausi recounts in the Shahnameh, are you not?" And on Meherji saying, "Yes, Greatness", asked, "Then are you not fire-worshippers? You made no mention of that."

"Your Excellency's excellent memory will recall that Firdausi, the king of poets, dealt with that point himself. His verse runs 'Say not that they are five-worshippers, say rather that they are worshippers of the one pure God' However, since this is a charge often urged against us, let me explain. We honour the sun and fire, both light, as the most formidable and beneficent manifestations of Almighty God's bounty. Without them what was life? What would it be without them? In both cases short, dark and brutish. Man came into his own, was able to face the jungle of huge frightening animals and slithering serpents, the forest of his own mental fears and of the many spirits and devils that he thought were lying in wait for him in the dark, when God sent light to his aid. We recognise this most friendly influence. Therefore it is that we turn to light when we pray to God, we concentrate our minds upon the sun or the flame the better to get rid of all dross from our thoughts while thanking or making submission to Him. It is not that we worship the sun or fire as the creator. They too we understand to be Ahura Mazda's creations; but worthy of a special status because of the power and usefullness he has bestowed upon them. I beg your Majesty's pardon for having taken so long on this simple point."

"I am glad you did, Dastur, you have made it understandable now". said the Emperor.

"I have heard," said Raja Todarmal, "that you neither burn nor bury your dead, You follow the gruesome practice of leaving them exposed

in high places to be got rid of by birds and animals of prey. Is this correct and if so, what is your rationale for it? You omitted this in your description of your religion, I noticed."

"Great Minister," said Meherji, "I omitted this because to my way of thinking, the method of disposing of the corpse is no part of my religion. Once the spirit has fled, what is the body, even of the greatest? A piece of steadily deteriorating flesh. Its disposal does not affect the further progress of the spirit that has left it. That will be judged on its deeds while alive, not on how its corpse is dealt with. Whether the flesh is consumed by fire, eaten by worms after burial, or by birds and animals on exposure, or just rots under the ravages of the elements, makes no real difference. We have followed an old custom of our ancestors in their land, and that is all. I have heard it argued, for what it is worth, that feeding wild birds and animals with our dead is also a form of the charity so strongly enjoined upon us by our religion, but I make no point of it."

"Truly, a liberal mind," said the musician Tansen. "I like his frankness. Tell me, oh Dastur Meherji Rana—I call you Rana for all that you need to look a perfect descendant of the sun is a curved sword by your side—you have talked about your religion without mentioning prophet or miracles, great penances and high austerities. Surely there is something wrong here. If not, a very unusual religion, yours!"

"Master of music and winner of hearts, know that I did not mention the Prophet in my short resume of the religion, because my emphasis was on what he taught, rather than on him personally. Truth to tell, too, we know very little with certainty about him, beyond the fact that he was a truly great man, that he spent some years in contemplation in the wilderness, that he preached the religion of the good life and turned the people away from bad practices. Consider the position of our ancestors on the morrow of the shattering of our empire, a few hundred people leaving helter-skelter in a few vessels they found by chance off the coast of Pars, no time for preparations, no time to get even the extant scripture together, no time for anything except to leave if they would be free and not bow their heads to the conqueror. Knowing little, therefore, I said nothing about that revered figure. He lives in the good lives of the people who practice his highly moral faith. As to miracles. I have none to offer you, unless it be that you consider our few continuing here among friends for so many centuries, a miracle in itself. That certainly cannot compare with the vivid miracles we have heard about in the last few days. Their absence in my religion no doubt renders it less picturesque, which I agree must seem to your artistic nature, a great loss," ended Meherji.

"Shrewdly said, a palpable hit," remarked Akbar. "What I find missing in your description of your religion is dogma. Are not its followers bound to believe this, that or the other? Are only acts, deeds important?"

"It is very much as your gracious Majesty sees it, a small percent-

age of faith and the rest works, what we call good thoughts, good words, good deeds. There must be belief in the divine power, in Ahura Mazda, and beyond that his service in action. No belief in any interceders is called for, prayer is for one's own mental satisfaction and spiritual comfort, but a person's salvation is not dependent on it. So, too, with the ritual, which accumulates wherever people come together in society; some of it is good and helps identification, some does no harm, some is irksome to the free spirit," said Meherji.

"An admirable religion for the man of reason with an awareness of consequences," said the Persian prince, Akbar's cousin from Shiraz. "Do you accept converts?"

"We have not upto now, sir," said Meherji. "You see we are bound by a promise we made to the ruler of the territory who allowed us to stay and gave us land. We promised we would not take into our faith his people."

"Any other promises?" asked the learned Faizee.

"Yes, Highness," said Meherji, "that we would not bear arms against him and his descendants, that we would adopt the local language and dress, that we would not kill the cow, that we would perform our marriages also in Sanskrit."

"How long ago was this?"

"About nine hundred years," said Meherji.

"And you still keep your vows? My congratulations," said Akbar. "Well, Dastur, you have given me much ground for thought. I'll send for you for a private talk. You will be here for sometime still." And he rose, dispersing the assembly.

THIS then is the Zarthosti religion in essence, very largely a practical system of ethical conduct which is well within the capacity of any Zarthosti who tries to practise it. There is about it nothing meretricious, no adventitous aids does it use. Here there is austere simplicity decent conduct and its reward, no titillation of the senses, no stimulation of the passions. Instead a pure, ample, ethereal air to breathe, in which magic does not intervene, in which man needs no intercessor with God. On this point it has been said:

"Truly in all men there is both the spark of God and the stain of the Devil. No so-called bhagwan or guru can kindle the first in any man into a steady, longlasting flame or wash from his heart for all time the second. Only the person himself or herself can do either. For the majority of sensible people, then, the general guide should be, 'Be a Lamp unto Thyself.' Know thyself and amend thyself. Seek God's blessings by prayer if you will and request His assistance in those tasks. Often it may be forthcoming to the sincere. Such, however, need no interceders for themselves. No gurus, sains, babas, pirs, saints etc., of this world, however greatly reputed, before whom they prostrate themselves, and whose miracles they speak of with bated breath, can win them God's grace or His mercy. For that let their deeds, following upon

their thoughts and words, be such as can, after His strict accounting, be approved.

"Ours is a land most fruitful in superstitions; ours are a people full of belief in, or longing for, miracles, the shortcut to all desirable ends, national and personal. Think hard, be honest, rely on facts, examine situations dispassionately—tush, what drudgery! No, no, get that celebrated astrologer's reading of the horoscope, visit this mai, that baba, the other shrine, wear a necklace, a chain, a ring bestowed by the sæcred hand or place, and all will be well, in fact all must be well, so let's go ahead with the multiple blessings of all these mighty forces, massed behind us! Alas, God's rule is different. Do what you like, He says, and pay for it. "Things are as they are, and their consequences will be as they will be; why then desire ye to equivocate?" Admire good works and the doers of good works, by all manner of means; better still, devote your own energies to doing them."

AND if you would like to know the Zaithosti point of view on wordly affairs, listen to this conversation between a Zarthosti father and his Zarthosti son: "A boy of eight in his best clothes was chattering away full of enthusiasm to his father about a party he had been to at the local magnate's house. They had this, they had that, everything was wonderful, eight first-rate horses in the stables, four carriages, countless servants and so on.

'You would like to have all that when you grow up?' asked his father. 'That would make you very happy, would it?'

'Oh, yes,' said the boy.

'Well, do you know, for once we have here a very rich man who is honest, so may he enjoy his riches! But remember usually one cannot be very rich without being quite a rascal, and you would not be happy in rascality whatever its rewards. You hate to tell even conventional white lies. Money is necessary primarily to ensure independence. If you have enough for that, you need no more. We are not rich, we are not even well-off, we just manage, but we are independent. flatter nobody, we ask nothing from anybody, we never hesitate to call a wrong a wrong and a wrong-doer a wrong-doer, however rich or powerful he is. We are able to do this, because we are content to live within our very moderate means and are obliged to no one for anything. It is possible much wealth, great power, will come to you in an honest way, without your doing anything evil or low for it. If that happens, the important thing for a man is the use he makes of these two, not the enjoyment he gets from having them. If the salaaming of a thousand men puff you up, you may be in a great position but you are a small man, and when a small man becomes aware of the real smallness below all the show he puts on-and sooner or later he can't avoid becoming aware of it—he is indeed a very unhappy man. All the power and wealth of the world cannot keep death away, and when death will come no one can say, though all can be certain the dead can neither take away

nor enjoy wealth or power. So you see how silly it is to be envious: I don't say you are now, but you must never be, for who is man envying? Another creature like himself whom death may take away at any moment from all that he is enjoying, on whom life may at any moment inflict pain, suffering, loss, making living itself worse than death. Happiness a man may have in short spans, it just does not go on forever: but content over a life-time is possible, content while striving one's hardest, doing one's best, always without malice, envy, dishonesty, lying, cheating. For a man who is a man, for a son of our family for instance, there is only one way of living: do right and don't bother about consequences. From that comes the peace of mind that is worth more in real terms than all the treasures of the world. And if you say how shall I know what is right, the answer is don't worry, you will always know when the time comes if your predisposition is towards right. Another thing, never hesitate to look at yourself as you are, don't run away from your faults or pretend they don't exist or are in fact virtues! Even if you can't correct your faults, as happens sometimes, at least be aware of them. Did you follow all I said?' The boy who had been listening most earnestly nodded his head and on his father saying, 'Wel', tell me then the main points,' repeated with understanding almost the full text.

'Good', said the father, 'now what you will become I don't know, but whatever you become, if you follow this you will be a good man. And that is infinitely better from the country's point of view than being just a great man, a ruler or a billionaire who is an indifferent or a bad man.'"

"Only the actions of the just Smell sweet and blossom in their dust;

"That best portion of a good man's life, His little, nameless, unremembered acts Of kindness and of love."

"That man is freed from servile bands Of hope to rise or fear to fall: Lord of himself, though not of lands, And having nothing, yet hath all."

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## OPINION

·Voi. XVIII

**17th January 1978** 

No. 39

#### IN PRAISE OF INDIA

NE afternoon over thirty years ago two men in their forties sat having tea on the velvety lawn of a lovely New Delhi garden in the shade of a tall tree with broad lightish green leaves. They were old friends, so did not need to make conversation. Companionably, they sipped their Darjeeling brew, an occasional remark passing between them. "Why so many chairs " asked the guest. "Oh, I think quite a number will be dropping in You know this political business is hotting up," answered the host. "Time for decision very near, I would say." "What, partition you mean!" said the other in a shocked voice. With a grave face the host nodded. Just then, a slightly older man joined them and taking the cup the host handed to him said, "Well, I think it's come. I don't know definitely, but ' heard at about two today it was just a matter of hours." "And what do you think " asked the first guest "Good or bad?" "That's not the relevant question now. Inevitable or not, has replaced it. One thing I know, whatever it is to be, let it be soon. This tension is becoming unbearable. Night or day I can't relax." Three or four other men came rushing in, their faces flushed with excitement and one shouted out, "Well, it's settled, Hurrah for Pakistan" The two with him were equally exhilerated. "Sit down," said the oldest man "and drink your tea quietly. If what you say is true, this is not a moment for excited joy, but rather for serious consideration. Have you any idea of the difficulties ahead?" "Oh, whatever they are, we'll face them all. The point is we have at last our own country. No longer shall we be dominated over by this wretched majority. I won't say more," and he looked at the first guest pointedly. While this exchange had taken place, three other men of over fifty had joined the group, and they too nodued in agreement.

"Look," said the first guest, "listen to me for a few minutes before you let cuphoria overcome you. I take it, after the years we've known and worked together, you'll agree that I am no enemy to anyone this soil has bred, whatever his religion or creed. Some of you are as close to me as brothers just as are some of the other faith. Now, here is what your brother feels. For God's sake, don't go ahead with this. Don't break up this unique polity, which, nurtured by the spread of the English language, Western knowledge and British institutions, has bound the individual peoples of a sub-continent into a state, and is going on to make a real nation of them. I tell you what you're contemplating is a wrong not only to India but to civilisation. And I tell you another thing too.

This polity, this entity, if allowed to live, will last. There is the essence of permanence in it. It has what the British call 'bottom', the hard-bitten standing-up in the face of difficulties which outlasts them all. I'm not at all sure that any breakaway portion from it will have this quality. Its birth being by reason of a forced division, the seeds of division will be endemic in it. Stay together and things will go well. You will have your honoured place in the whole country and will rule it together with the others." "Oh, such twaddle" said one of the later guests, "surely this is no time to listen to it. We must think, plan, go ahead forthwith." "Just listen a little longer" said the first guest. "I have served in places where you are the majority for many years, and two general observations I'll permit myself. You are rarely able to work together and you push everything to extremes. In your own interest you need to be among the others to give of your best. Otherwise, you'll become a Middle East state, a Syria or Lebanon, where governments fall by coup at least once a year and bloodshed for political reasons is the rule rather than the exception. You don't want that, do you?" "Oh, rot" said a brash voice "anything's better than being helots here." And he rose, breaking-up the party. When all had gone save the outsider and another, the host said in a sad voice "I agree with you it's a bad thing that's happening and so, I'm sure, does our friend here. But now, the die is cast, the Rubison crossed, and for us and people like us there's no choice left. We must go that way. Wish us luck." And he pushed out his hand. The first guest gripped it firmly and in a choking voice said, "God protect you. May he be with you always"

So they all went to Pakistan, those high officials of the Government of India and became even higher officials of the Government of Pakistan. And what has been the course of happenings in Pakistan as regards its political wholeness? After a few years, they turned the peoples of the West into one state, abolishing Sind, Punjab, etc., and creating West Pakistan, then they went back to the individual states, then East Bengal seconded and became the separate country of Bangladesh, and even now remaining Pakistan is troubled by secessionist rumours. And as to changes of Government by coups and other devious means, is there any end to them? Alas, alas, Pakistan lacks stability both in its territorial integrity and its political system.

Consider next the position in India. The country has so far held together firmly and unitedly. Not that there have not been difficulties. After much struggle several of the old states had to be re-organised on a more logical basis. India is now very largely a federation of peoples. Each of its peoples is big enough in area and population to form a separate country, yet the sub-continent is one country, and that substantially by the cho.ce and interest of each state. Better by far, it is felt, to be Indian and Punjabi or Tamil or Maharashtrian than to be just the second. The folly of those in power at the centre may still endanger this happy state of affairs. To insist on making Hindi the link-language when a number of states would rather have English as at present and other

stupidities of a like nature may quickly inflame public opinion in some areas, but as yet extremes have been avoided. Another cloud on the horizon is the very complete victory of the CPI(M) in the Bengal elections some months ago and in the recent Tripura elections. Here with two states in the East wholly in the Communist grip, the situation needs at least very careful watching. True, the two governments are said to be behaving with propriety at the moment, but it must not be forgotten that the operative words in the term the Communist Party of India (Marxist) are not India or Party but Communist and, perhaps to a slightly lower extent, Marxist. Well the future must bear its own burdens. At this moment, Praise we India whole-heartedly and full-throatedly for its stability. The integrity of its territory has been dented by foreign aggression (parts of our land in the North-West and North-East being in the possession of the Chines), but internally, Stability has been Complete. Long may it remain so, and may the future see the foreign aggression ended, must be the prayer of every true Indian.

(To be continued)

#### THE GAMES NATIONS PLAY

(Continued)

#### NERGIS DALAL

Copeland talks of a fascinating organistation in the United States known as the Games Centre. A carefully selected assortment of super experts are engaged by the government. Each one is an expert on a certain country and under him works a carefully supervised team. Each expert and his team are given or gamed out international trends, crises, and questions, and it is their job to predict the outcome and assess how the country will react. With the benefit of information teletyped hourly from the State Department, CIA, the Pentagon and other American government agencies, the various teams assess their respective positions, work out solutions and suggest the action that will be taken. Action is in the form of a memorandum stating what this or that player thought the real person-Tito, Sadat, Mrs. Gandhi, Bhutto,-or other leaders would really do under the circumstances. Sometimes a set of alternatives is provided, each with its "Probablity Priority". actions or solutions are fed back into the stream of incoming information, either by putting them into the computer or in cases where the purely personal element was very strong, on the desk of the "players" who had been drilled in the personal characteristics of the world leaders and who would be most effected if the action were real. They found that predicting the general course of European politics, including the Russian, was easy. It could almost have been left to the computer, if the computer had been constantly fed high quality up-to-date data about economics, public opinion and other changeables. Predicting what

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would happen in Afro-Asian countries was more difficult and allowance had to be made for human sensitivities and instincts. For instance all programmable evidence had showed that Nuri Pasha's government was virtually coup proof and yet there was Qassim's coup d'etat in Iraq.! No doubt all programmable evidence also showed that Mrs. Gandhi's government would be returned to power against the Janata in the recent elections.

No country which is dependent on outside aid can be considered really independent, but the aided countries can exploit and play up one powerful donor country against the other, thus getting for itself the best possible bargain from both sides.

When a nation chooses to violate any of its stated policies—such as non-interference in the internal affairs of a sowereign nation, it finds means outside the normal machinery of government for releasing forces for which it can later disclaim responsibility.

It takes very little ingenuity to make fanatics of any country convinced of the wickedness of their government. To frustrated people, governments are the most convenient target. When a big country or power does not want to overtly overthrow a certain government it will make use of fanatics inside the country. A fanatic, in political jargon, is anyone who abnegates self and who will go to any lengths, regardless of harm to self, in the interests of a cause. He is a loser by definition and beautifully expendable. He is an important weapon in the hands of the determined non-fanatic—one who intends not to die but to live for a cause. Fanatics are often as valuable dead as they are alive.

The average informed reader of newspapers should look at all official statements of policies as a *move*, which has a specific purpose—not necessarily the one that has been stated.

It is a fallacy to think of economic aid or military aid strictly as such, even when the tightest strings are attached to it, because aid to a government for any specific purpose frees the government on funds which have been set aside for that purpose and those funds can be used for any other purpose of the great strictly as such, even when the tightest strings are attached to it, because aid to a government or funds which have been set aside for that purpose and those funds can be used for any other purpose.

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## OPINION

Vol. XVIII

24th January 1978

No 40

(Painting the lily and gilding refined gold being occupations to which this Editor is averse, he places before his readers the larger portion of ex-Justice Tarkunde's recent piece, which he finds extremely apposite to our present condition)

THE Janata Party was not elected to power because the people believed that it would bring about an economic miracle in the country. The reason why the people voted for the Janata Party was that they were disgusted with authoritarian and oppressive rule, with arbitrary arrests, with demolition of houses without notice; with forcible sterilizations, with the total suppression of news and views. The state government has justified the people's choice by terminating a tarian and oppressive rule, by putting an end to the climate of the down and the rule of law.

here is at present a well-marked tendency, particularly among urban intellectuals, of indulging in radic, l-sounding and strongly-worded criticism of the Janata government. One form of this criticism is to suggest that the Janata government is following the same policies as the previous Congress government and there is hardly any difference between the two. Only those who have no regard for civil liberties and democratic rights can share this view. To equate the Janata government with the previous Congress government amounts to saying that there is no difference between democracy and dictatorship.

Another form of criticism of the Janata government is less mischievous but equally unfair. It consists of pointing out that the Janata government has failed on the economic front, particularly in checking the rise in the prices of essential commodities. These critics forget that prices were already rising during the last 12 months of the Emergency period. the rise being as high as about 12 per cent. Many of the critics. moreover, support on the one hand the demand of employees for greater bonus and dearness allowance, are indifferent to the closure of factories and workshops on account of frequent strikes, and still expect on the other hand that, inspite of the increased money supply and decreased production, the Janata government should somehow bring down the level of prices. The critics are also usually indifferent to the necessity of organising the people for the purpose of checking the hoarding and profiteering by local traders. One should realise that, given the persistent demand for larger money incomes and the decrease of production caused by frequent strikes, any government will take considerable time

in devising and implementing effective measures for price control.

All criticism of the Janata government, however, is not so unfair. Even a sympathetic and democratically inclined critic finds several lapses in the performances of the Janata government.

In the Janata Party's election manifesto a definite pledge was given that "the Janata Party will . . . repeal MISA, release all political detenues and review all other unjust laws." This statement cannot possibly mean that what the Janata Party had promised to do was to repeal MISA and pass another law for preventive detention. The refusal of the Janata government to do away with preventive detention is thus a clear breach of its election pledge. What is worse is that whereas all previous laws in this sphere were conceived of as temporary measures, the Janata gevrnment proposes to make preventive detention a regular feature of our political life by incorporating the provisions in that behalf in the Code of Criminal Procedure. It is claimed on behalf of the Government that the severity of the previous law will be watered down to some extent; but preventive detention will nevertheless continue to be detention without trial and without any finding of guilt or award of sentence by a court of law.

While several arguments have been advanced to buttress such a "lawless law" (an expression used in a judgment of the Supreme Court), its essentially harmful and undemocratic aspects have not been properly appreciated in the controversy on this subject. Firstly, despite the frequent assertion that detention under such a law is preventive and not punitive, the fact remains that a person subjected to the so-called preventive detention is deprived of his personal liberty on the strength of the subjective satisfaction of an executive officer and not on the judicial verdict of a court of law, a verdict which is normally subject to confirmation or rejection by a court of appeal. Punishment on the basis of subjective satisfaction of the executive is contrary to all notions of justice and fair play, and can never be tolerated by any civilised society in times of peace. Secondly, a law of preventive detention lead to laxity both in the investigation into offences by the police and the enforcement of criminal law by the relevant department of the government. If a person who is reported to have committed an offence can be detained merely on the approval of an executive officer, why should the police investigate into the offence, collect the necessary evidence and place it before a court of law? Thirdly, a law of preventhe letention places arbitrary power in the hands of the police and the concerned authorities Injustice and harassment of innocent persons (the so-called "excesses") are endemic in the enforcement of such a law. Lastly, the power of preventive detention is the main reason why the people are afraid of the police and the government, and to remove this climate of fear should obviously be the first duty of any government claiming to be democrat's and accepting the doctrine of popular

sovereignty.

As against this manifold mischief, let us see what social good is sought to be achieved by a law of preventive detention. The recent cases of sabotage of railway tracks and of a vital public undertaking are referred to, and the question is posed whether such dangerous activities can be checked without preventive detention. Those who advance this argument, however, are the first to point out that the perpetraters of the sabotage are still unknown. If they are unknown, who is to be subjected to preventive detention? Further, supposing the police succeed in tracing the offenders, what are the reasons for not producing them before a court of law?

It is also claimed that preventive detention is necessary for checking the activities of smugglers and of traders who indulge in hoarding and profiteering. It is again not adequately explained why those who are known to be smugglers and those who commit offences of hoarding and profiteering are not tried in a court of law.

It is often supposed, particularly by those who do not know the law, that it is very difficult to prove the guilt of the accused in such cases because of the high standard of proof required for conviction in a court of law. In appropriate cases, however, the legislature can (and does) throw the burden of proving certain facts on the accused. The Customs Act for instance provides that where any goods are seized in the reasonable belief that they are smuggled goods, the burden of proving that they are not smuggled goods shall be on the person from whose possession the goods were seized. Similar provisions can be made in other cases where justice requires that the accused should be required to prove the facts which are specially within his knowledge. For instance, a person loitering near a railway track without any apparent cause may be required by law to prove that he was not a saboteur. It is also sometimes claimed that if such offenders are brought before a court, they will be released on bail and would then be free to continue their antisocial activities. But surely the court in such cases can be asked not to enlarge the accused on bail, and if the legal provisions in this behalf are not adequate, a relevant amendment in the law can be made. If in such a case an accused is not enlarged on bail, his position is not comparable to a person subjected to preventive detention. The order of a magistrate refusing to enlarge him on bail is not based on the magistrate's subjective satisfaction and is, moreover, liable to be examined and set aside by a superior court.

Preventive detention cannot possibly be justified in times of peace. What is necessary to prevent anti-social activities is to make proper laws and to see that they are strictly implemented. Prevention can be justified, and that to a limited extent, in times of actual war arising from foreign aggression or internal insurrection.

IN its election manifesto the Janata Party promised that it "will . . . seek to rescind the 42nd Amendment." The reason for rescinding the

in referendum

42nd Amendment was not only that it contained many anti-deractic provisions, but that the manner in which it was passed amounted to a fraud on the Constitution and a clear violation of the fundamental principle that sovereignty in a democracy belongs to the people. Instead of placing the proposed amendments before the people in a general election which was then overdue, the Congress Government rushed the Amendment Bill through a Parliament which had already exhausted its mandate of five years. In passing the Amendment Bill in these circumstances, the then ruling party took unfair advantage of its pre-existing twothirds majority and deprived the electorate of its right to pronounce its verdict on the proposed amendments. Despite these considerations, which were loudly voiced by Janata leaders in their election propaganda, the Janata Party on coming to power has preferred to deal piece-meal with different provisions of the 42nd Amendment Act instead of seeking to rescind it as a whole. By adopting this procedure the Janata government lost an excellent opportunity of bringing home to the Indian people the principle that popular sovereignty is the very foundation on which the structure of the Indian Constitution has been erected. The Janata government lost this chance because it did not have adequate faith in the political understanding of the common people. The government felt that if an attempt was made to resemd the 42nd Amendment as a whole, the opposition Congress party may be able to fool the electorate by proparating the view that the Janata Party was against some superficially progressive provisions of the 42nd Amendment such as the introduction of the vague words "Sec alist" and "Secular" in the Preamble of the Con-Experience of the last election should have convinced the Janata leaders that their commitment to the principle of popular sovereignty would have carried the day with the masses of the Indian people.

Rescinding the 42nd Amendment, however, is only a part of the changes in the Constitution which are required to be carried out in the post-Emergency period. In addition to rescinding the 42nd Amendment, the Constitution is required to be amended for other purposes, such as (1) preventing abuse of Emergency Provisions, (2) removing the inroads made in the Indomental rights guaranteed by the Constitution, and (3) securing the result of the Constitution cannot be altered.

ical Humanist

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# OPINION

Vol. XVIII

31st January 1978

No. 41

#### THE JANATA LAPSES

(Continued from 24-1-1978)

#### V. M. TARKUNDE

IN seeking to amend the Constitution for these purposes, the Janata I government should have followed the democratic procedure of placing before the people the whole range of the amendments proposed by it The people would have certainly approved all those amendments which were intended to stabilise democracy and secure the rule of law. From this position of strength, the Janata government should have entered into negotiations with the opposition leadership to seek its support to the proposed amendments If this procedure were adopted, the Congress Party could hardly have failed to fall in line with the will of the people Instead of following this democratically sound and strategical advantageous procedure, the Janata Party preferred to confabulate with the opposition leaders in order to place some "agreed" proposals before the public. In taking this course the Janata leaders not only lost an excellent opportunity of promoting popular education in democratic values, but also showed their lack of faith in the people's capacity to understand basic political issues. They failed to realise that the Constitution of a democratic country should be amended on the strength of popular opinion and not by confabulation between the leaders of rival political parties.

It is significant that no mention of prohibition was made in the Janata Party's election manifesto. A reference to the prohibition policy does not find a place either in the paragraph dealing with "Health to the Millions" or in the "Social Charter" consisting of 15 items enumerated in the manifesto. Obviously the Janata leaders did not want to divide their vote on this issue.

The policy of prohibition, as distinguished from that of temperance, is being adopted by the Janata government although it is unworkable in practice and unsound in principle. Its implementation in the Bombay State (and the later Maharashtra State) had disasterous consequences Apart from loss of revenue, the prohibition policy resulted in large-scale corruption of the police force, tremendous increase in illicit distillation, emergence of a new type of goondaism, flooding of criminal Courts with prohibition cases, and a noticeable growth of alchoholic consumption by all classes of the people.

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Imposition of prohibition, moreover, has no moral justification. While it is the legitimate function of law to prevent one person from doing harm to another, the limits of law are transgressed when it seeks to "improve" a person against his own judgment. Prohibitionists believe that they are very virtuous because they abstain from alchoholic consumption, and they are eager to impose that virtue on others. They fail to realise that those who consume alchohol in moderate quantities may be as virtuous as they are, and not being involved in power politics, are indeed likely to be comparatively more virtuous than self-righteous politicians.

Since they are not committed to the prohibition policy by their election manifesto, Janata leaders will do well if they abandon that impracticable and morally indefensible policy, and adopt instead a well-considered programme of promoting temperance in the country.

The attacks by the Janata government on academic freedom cannot be justified on any democratic ground. The government's first attack was on certain books which were written by eminent Indian historians at the request of Mr. M. C. Chagla who was then the Minister of Education in the Union Government. The proposed action of banning the books has now been stayed, presumably because of criticism from different quarters. The second attack of the Janata government was on the right of certain academics to go abroad for participating in international seminar. Defending such action, Dr. P. C. Chunder, the Union Minister for Education, is reported to have told the Lok Sabha that the government had the right to impose such restrictions "to safeguard national interest". Does the Janata government believe that national interest requires that Indian academics should be deprived of their freedom of expression by preventing them from going abroad for participation in international seminars? In all probability such action, besides being contrary to the basic values of democracy, is contrary to law as well.

### OUR MOST IMPORTANT INTERNAL PROBLEM

HE public revulsion against the forced sterilisations carried out during Mrs. Gandhi's emergency is still hampering India's family planning programme. Family planning has been renamed "family welfare" in a despairing attempt to give it a semblance of respectability. But euphemisms haven't worked. In the first six months after the overthrow of Mrs. Gandhi, only 346,000 sterilisations were performed. The government doubts whether the annual total will be much above 800,000. This is not only far below the 8m vasectomies performed, many by compulsion, in 1976-77 but also well behind the 2.67m carried out by persuasion only the year before.

The regional pattern of sterilisations this year is disturbing. In the northern belt—the focus of Mr. Sanjay Gandhi's relentless campaign last year—hospitals which used to get 100 volunteers a month now get only

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six or seven. Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state in the country, is recording barely 1,900 sterilisations a month compared with 20,000 a month in earlier years. Even in the four southern states where there was little compulsion, the sterilisation rate is less than a quarter of what it was last year—167,000 in the six months up to September compared with 728,000 in 1976. Yet the southern and western states together, representing 40% of India's population, have accounted for three quarters of all sterilisation cases since April.

India has funnelled enormous financial and administrative resources into family planning during the past two decades. Despite falling well short of targets, its programme has been one of the most effective in the third world. The birth rate had been brought down from 41 per 1,000 in the early 1960s to a little under 33 per 1,000 in 1976. In that year the rate of population growth fell below 2% for the first time since independence. All these gains are now in danger of being lost.

The setback to family planning has come at a time when the programme needs more than ever to be strengthened. Babies born during the population boom of the 1950s and 1960s are now becoming parents, so that the birth potential is rising sharply and needs to be countered by a much bigger birth control effort. About 4m people are using conventional contraceptives, including pills, which are available either free or at subsidised rates. But virtually all such people live in urban centres, where contraceptives are easily available More than 70% of the population lives in rural areas, far away from family planning centres, and only long-lasting forms of birth control will work for them.

In 1965 great expectations were aroused by the intra-uterine device, a small metal coil which, when inserted in the womb, is 95% successful in preventing pregnancies. But the device sometimes causes excessive bleeding, and is often involuntarily expelled. Its popularity fell sharply: only about 100,000 insertions were performed from April to September compared with 250,000 in those six months last year and initial estimates of 5m a year.

Abortion was legalised in India a few years ago. In theory it is available only when the health of the mother is endangered or on similar grounds. But in practice almost anybody who wants an abortion can get one. A woman merely has to state that her pregnancy was the result of a failure of a birth control device and this is accepted as a form of mental strain which justifies an abortion. But clinics with facilities for abortions are few and far between even in cities and are virtually nonexistent in rural areas. This is why abortion is only a peripheral form of birth control.

In urban areas the birth rate has been brought down to 28 per 1,000, quite close to the target of 25 per 1,000. But in the villages the rate remains as high as 36 per 1,000. After the relative failure of the intrauterine device programme, and until a long-lasting pill or injection has been perfected, sterilisation will remain the only realistic method of birth control in the countryside.

The question is whether state governments will have the courage to

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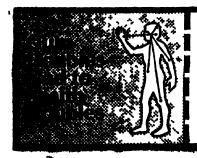
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push forward again with an issue that Sanjay Gandhi, by his crude methods, made so politically explosive. The health minister, Mr. Raj Naram, has shown little inclination to put pressure on the state governments for a sterilisation programme, apart from calling upon them to organise family planning fortnights in October and December. Sterilisations rose marginally in October as a result. But the overall downward trend in all forms of contraception indicates that the slackness of state governments is at least partly to blame. Even the number of free condoms distributed fell from 79m to 47m from April to September although there was no drop in demand: commercial sales rose from 36m to 47m in the same period.

In characteristic fashion Raj Narain has issued a plea for all young men to follow the ancient Indian path of brahmacharya until they are 25 years old. He has also suggested raising the minimum legal age of marriage to 21 for boys and 18 for girls from 18 and 16 respectively. Since even the present age limits seem unenforceable, such suggestions skirt the real issue."

Courtesy: The Economist

#### HYPOCRITES ALL!

#### NERGIS DALAL

What a nation of hypocrites we are! So many high-sounding and noble sentiments about ahimsa and the sanctity of all life—and underneath so much callous indifference to suffering. A great deal of militant noise has been made through the years by ban-the-cow-slaughter groups on religious, moral and ethical grounds. History books, referring to beer eating in ancient times, are condemned as anti-national and state after state has brought in legislation prohibiting the killing of cows and the eating of beef.

And yet what do we find in actual fact? When we are not simply turning out all our surplus cattle to die slowly of starvation on the streets, we are exporting them in large numbers to countries in West Asia, where they are butchered and converted into beef. If this is not the height of sophistry I should like to know what is. Have we heard slogans against the exporting of cattle to other countries? Has a single voice been raised—apart from animal welfare organizations—to stop this cruelty? And cruelty it undoubtedly is.

Live export of animals causes a great deal of suffering to the creatures involved. First the animals arrive exhausted and dehydrated at the docks after their long journey from the countryside, driven many many dusty miles with whips and sticks and no stops for food or water. They now face the additional torture of a three to five-day sea voyage, without adequate shelter and no facilities for water or food. Again at the other



end they are herded into trucks or trains and taken to their destination, ending up as beef, after crude and often violent methods of slaughter. Is all this permissable simply because the cattle are not being killed on the sacred so'l of India?

The same situation or worse exists as far as monkeys are concerned. Monkeys, considered sacred in India are the embodiment of Hanuman and worshipped by millions of our fellow-men. I well remember an incident in Kota, many years ago, when a monkey was shot, either by accident or design. It caused a near-riot and the monkey was given a funeral that would have done credit to a national hero.

And yet what is the reality? We have been exporting thousands and thousands of monkeys for vivisection to both the United States and to Britain. In Uttar Pradesh 63% of villages have lost all their monkeys. The Rhesus monkey has all but disappeared and the International Un.on for the Conservation of Nature reports that fifteen species of monkeys are now seriously threatened with extinction as a result of laboratory needs. "The animals are exposed to unimaginable suffering in experiments that are often speculative, academic, repititive, duplicated, pointless or downright sadistic." They have recently been used in the US for testing germ and nerve warfare methods. They are strapped to seats and crashed at measured speeds to help motor accident research. Until last month we were still exporting them in hundreds to earn foreign exchange of which we already, it seems, have too much!

(Incidentally, 1978 is the "Year of Animal's Rights" as drawn up by The International League of Animal's Rights.)

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## OPINION

, Vol. XVIII

14th February 1978

No. 43

#### POWER IN AN EMERGENT SOCIETY

SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

A reconsideration of the power-allocation between the Centre and the States may assume great urgency, if we really care for federalism and national integration. It is unclear to persons in Eastern India why coal prices should be so high and spiralling since its nationalisation and even more unclear why these prices should be uniform throughout India while textile prices vary widely. In any case a reconsideration does not mean confrontation and the Prime Minister should not have used preemptive language or the vocabulary of the guillotine at Bangalore on January 22. Had the constitution been unitary or alternatively had the country achieved even partial integration a debate might have been less necessary and less urgent.

The President in his Republic Day broadcast quite understandably stressed the assurance we should feel from the fact that for the first time since 1947 politics is not dominated by a monolithic party. Again, for the first time since 1947 conscientious men with varying shades of political opinion are cooperating for the good of the nation. The President as well as Shri Jayaprakash Narayan have warned us against the danger of the emergence of neo-fascism engineered by frustrated and defeated powerseekers and aided by subsidised organisations committed to violence, like the Anand Marg. The dastardly attacks on our embassy staff in London and Washington, the two plane crashes one of which cost two hundred and fifty lives, the increasing member of sabotaged train accidents—these add up to only one conclusion. There are powerful interests hell-bent on discrediting the Janata Government at the Centre. Politics in West Bengal has, for a long time been divorced from realpolitik, otherwise Indira Gandhi's former gangster leaders would not have been able to hold meetings and to forcibly occupy the party office. But wanton lawlessness has infected other States also. We are experiencing the crisis of a frustrated generation as well as of a deracine, uprooted generation. A generation of students has grown up which is more interested in discotheques, drugs, and girl-teasing than in their books, libraries and laboratories. The sad fact remains that in one vital and important respect the India of 1978 is not different from the India of the Emergency. Education which should be a liberator of the human spirit became an instrument of politiking and subversion during Indira's rule. That it remains so to-day is a tragic commentary on today's India.

The CPI(M) government in West Bengal has got its priorities wrong. In respect of education which, curiously, is a concurrent subject, the Centre and the State are at cross purposes. The Prime Minister and the Central Education Minister have repeatedly emphasised that rural and primary education should have priority over so-called (and indeed miscalled) higher education. The Minister for Higher Education in West Bengal seems to hold the precisely opposite view and is indeed acting accordingly. This writer does not mind the temporary supersession of four universities. What he objects to is that the CPI(M) government is indirectly endorsing the policy associated with Dr. Nurul Hassan and Dr. S. N. Sen. In point of fact, it can hardly be called a policy. It is an all-round subsidy given to college and university teachers, most of whom already drew handsome salaries, and repaid society by spending most of their time on touting for tuitions, cram-book writing and organising question leaks. The Minister said on January 31 that society was responsible for deterioration of higher education in the State. Nothing could be falser or more misleading than this piece of gratuitous wasse. Successive governments have deliberately diluted the content of higher education simultaneously bribing the agents of corruption, the college and university teachers. The idea is that a half-educated malcontent can always be used as a gangster and can never be an instrument of social, cultural or total revolution. Presumably, that is why the CPI(M) government has guaranteed the monthly salaries of college teachers at a cost of four crores of people's money while school teachers-primary and secondary-remain grossly underpaid and often unpaid. Had the CPI(M) government really been a people's government they would not have acquiesced in the creation of a new university— Midnapur They would have closed down at least two West Bengal universities and a large number of substandard colleges. The closing down of substandard mismanaged universities and colleges is the only way to reinstate educational standards not vague denunciations of society as Mr. Sambhu Ghosh, the West Bengal Education Minister had indulged in.

The Chief Minister Mr. Jyoti Basu rightly said that medical students who obtain their degrees through malpractice should be debarred from practising. But is this consistent with the overgenerous exgratia "grace marks" given to the unsuccessful B. Com. students which tripled the percentage of passes. Educational standards are falling rapidly and the manipulators and accessories of this decline are being rewarded at the expense of the people and by depriving the primary and secondary teachers. This is a case of double standards, and of connivance at corruption. why the centre and the states must sit together to reconsider the salary scales, and to decide whether education should remain a concurrent subject or should be a State subject or a Central one. The President in his Republic Day speech posed the most important questions for an acquisitive society masquerading as a socialist one: "Is it not morally wrong to confer on the relatively privileged classes additional benefits merely because they are organised and vociferous?" What the CPI(M) government has done in West Bengal is a dusty answer to the President's query, but the other

states—Janata and Congress managed—are not very much better. The President further asked, "can we ignore the larger majority because they are not organised and articulate?" It is not politicking alone that has ruined Indian Education, particularly the Humanities. Trade Union methods have also been contributory.

But I entirely disagree with the CPI(M) Chief Minister that the solution is more power for the states. The states may need certain powers which they have hitherto not enjoyed but some states have themselves to thank for politicalising food, education and the police. It is wrong to pass sweeping judgements on the police. There are many fair-minded and conscientious police officers (I have met at least one) who are eager to help persons in distress and to root out corruption. Would it be desirable to let such police officers be bullied by party workers, MLAs or Ministers? The Janata government came to power on various issues. One of the issues was certainly decentralisation. But it is an overimplification and a delusion to equate decentralisation with additional powers for the states. It is much more complex than that, and if Sheik Abdullah's suggestion were accepted that the states should have all residuary powers, the Centre having only defence, foreign policy and communications, fragmentation of India would be inevitable.

All the same, a dialogue between the Centre and the States not only over the diffusion of power but the utilisation of power would be beneficial Neo-fascism is growing. Terrorism is growing. Indiscipline is growing. It would be tragic if within a year of India's liberation a climate were created in which people would long for a very strong and authoritarian government. Out of such climates Emergencies are born or manufactured.

A Centre-State dialogue should concentrate on the indiscipline and corruption in the relatively more pampered and privileged sections of society—the Bank Employees, the Food Corporation, the college teachers and Electric Supply Corporation. The Santhaldih mentality, which regards overtime as a fundamental right has infected even the Electric Supply Corporation's collection offices.

Shri Jayaprakash Narayan has raised the very pertinent question about the life-styles of the Janata Ministers and their sincerity about creating an egalitarian society. The pyramid approach to planning as enunciated by the Prime Minister sounds very attractive on paper. But so did the slogan "Garibi Hato" which we now know was a hoax and a fraud. There is little evidence anywhere in India, that the overpaid, pampered, priviledged section of society is being either restrained or discriminated against. There is much evidence to the contrary.

Since the above was written, the Janata government has proved that it is venal too. The ceiling on the price of mustard oil has been lifted at the instance of the tycoons and the price of mustard oil in Calcutta (and presumably elsewhere) has shot up. Potatoes, onions, garlic, even treacle are being exported for the sake of the foreign exchange which only benefits plutocrats.



Leo A. Rebello: Today one requires Rs. 1 lakh minimum to contest the elections for legislative assembly. A poor man cannot even aspire, leave alone venture to contest the same. In other words, only the rich can contest, which means 1 per cent minority (rich) ruling 99 per cent majority (poor). Again, there are party politics. One finds all the evils of inflation. unemployment, strikes, hoarding, blackmatketing, wrong priorities, et. al. There is no one to represent the common man's interest.

I have, therefore, decided to contest the ensuing elections as an independent to represent the common man. I am not going to spend more than Rs. 250 which is the nomination fee, because, I cannot afford to. I am a social worker, teacher, and writer, and I want to bring about a revolution in politics. Friends, admirers, well-wishers, common public and media is my capital, and I want to see how best they can give me a hand.

Friends and admirers will campaign for me. I hope the media will give me the necessary publicity in reaching the common man, and the common man will vote for me and ensure that I win. Will those who can contribute please contribute their mite towards my electioneering expenses? Detailed accounts will be kept.

My constituency is Kandivli, i.e., Malad (east) Quarry Road entire, including Govindnagar and Datta Mandir Road; Malad (West) entire starting from Madina Manzil-Sunder Nagar to Kandivali; Malad (rural), i.e., Adarsha Nagar to Marve to Erangal, Darivli, etc., and Charkop area.

My election symbol is the bicycle—a common man's means of transport on which he can go miles and overtake even motor cars and high powered engines if he is steady and knows where he is heading.

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## OPINION

Vol. XVIII

21st February 1978

No. 44

## CAST NOT THY VOTE UNWORTHILY

Oh justice, thou hast fled to brutish beasts,

And men have lost their reason,

exclaimed an old lover of poetry and honesty when he heard that the Central Election Committee of the Janata Party had, passing over the very suitable Mangala Parikh, chosen a B. A Desai to be the Janata candidate for the Malabar Hill Constituency. Odd, very odd, he said to himself, it is less than a year since the ending of the Emergency and they, some of whom suffered under it themselves, now well-quilted in power and office, governmental and party, seem to have forgotten it already. Truly for them it must be that

Happiness's crown of happiness

Is forgetting miseries past.

And so, unthinking of the country's real good, they plunge into politicking ploys, bargaining and horse-trading, until they come up with a B A. Desai.

Mangala Parikh is an eminent social worker, long associated with politics and education, known for her good works and love of freedom and democratic values. Mrs. Gandhi jailed her early in the emergency and kept her in jail until the emergency ended. Her husband Dr. G. G. Parikh, a physician beloved in his neighbourhood and respected by all for his sincerity of purpose in politics and life alike, also spent the larger part of the Emergency in Indira's jails. Nor was their teenage daughter spared. She too had to do her shorter stint under dear Indira's care.

And now to the Central Committee's candidate, B. A. Desai, a youngish lawyer associated with Mr. Rajni Patel. Supporter of Indira in the Emergency, he is reported to have appeared on the Government side in at least one important case involving fundamental freedom, spoken at Indira's Anti-Fascist rallies, and called J. P. a Fascist. This is the candidate the Central Election Committee has, in its supreme wisdom, selected for us, voters of the Malabar Mill Constituency. Shall we make deep obersance, say 'on our heads and eyes be it', and pass in line through the polling booth, making our marks of compliance to their will?

"No, I do not think so" many voters will say, "the paramount qualifications for a candidate in this election have to be love of freedom, devotion to democratic values and honesty. Who has these among the candidates offering themselves? The Communists of either section are of course out, so is the Indira Congress and even the Reddi Congress which

maintained Indira's dictatorship for so long. Turn we then to the independents. Ah, here we have the man, Narayan Tawde. He seems to fit the bill."

During the Emergency he was detained under MISA from September 1975 and was released only when the elections were announced. His wife and daughter offered satyagraha and were also jailed. He has experience of politics at the grass-roots, has been a member of the Bombay Municipal Corporation and is a social worker closely connected with guite a number of educational and social service institutions around him. Of his public spirit there could be no better proof than this, that finding the Janatal Central Election Committee's decision in this matter unconscionable and unjust, he resigned the party posts he held and valued, secretaryship of the Bombay unit of the Janata Party and membership of the Executive of its Maharashtra units, and decided to protest against this perverse decision by standing himself as an independent. How, in all conscience, he felt, could he, continuing in these posts, ask voters to vote for the official candidate of the Janata Party, when in his judgment, the candidate was not only vastly inferior to Mangala Parikh, but also unworthy of their suffrage in himself? The statement of assets attached to his appeal to voters shows him to be a lower middle-class man of very modest means. To charges of disloyalty to the Janata Party, his answer, loud and clear, is borne on the first page of his trilingual appeal:

If to tell the truth be rebellion

Count me a rebel too!

Here then, fellow-citizens and co-voters of the Malabar Hill Constituency, is a person worthy to be your representative. Straightforward, simple, public-spirited, experienced in politics, knowledgeable at the grass-roots, he deserves your support. In him you will find no duplicity, no smart tricks, no ostentation, no showing of wheat and selling of barley In hard work and public service, you will find him second to none. He is the true Janata representative. By electing him, moreover, you will teach a lesson to the overbearing and arrogant Delhi politicians who seem to think their word must be law to all us humbler folk.

#### FAILURE IN HIGH PLACES

#### S. H. BELAVADI

THE nineteen months of emergency and all that went with it was a nightmarish experience in the otherwise placid life of a citizen in this country. The ease with which it was introduced and continued with impunity for as long as nineteen months has no parallel in a country democratically governed as ours. It is no doubt true that the people are by and large apathetic, poor, ignorant, and in a way, fatalists. It therefore appeared to all intents and purposes that there was no remedy and the whole country lay prostrate, weak and helpless. Are the people to

blame in the sense that they did not react strongly, as would be the case in any other more mature country? Perhaps yes—perhaps no. True, the people did react and showed the rulers their proper place when the peaceful opportunity came. However, I am not one of those who would blame the people for failure to react strongly at the time of, or during, the emergency. My main complaint is against important sections of the people—privileged persons with special positions—who forgot their obligations to the people. It is their dismal failure which brought about the tragedy. The common people are engaged in their daily struggle for bread and it would be too much to expect them to revolt and avert the tragedy. Even so, they did rise to the occasion when the opportunity came.

First and foremost, the Congress party itself should be squarely blamed for what happened in the country. The stalwarts within the party, just went under, without even a whimper. They could have easily stood up and said 'No, this shall not be permitted'. They failed at the most critical stage of India's history and India should never forgive them for this very serious lapse on their part.

Next, the presiding officers of Parliament and the State Legislatures come in for their share of the blame. The Speakers of the Legislative bodies, instead of protecting the rights, liberties and privileges of members, just preferred to toe the line. We are never tired of quoting the example of the English speaker in bygone days when there was a struggle between the King and the Parliament. The King had entered the House of Commons chamber with a drawn sword in his hand, along with his aides, and questioned the Speaker about certain members whom he wanted to arrest personally and deal with, as they were the leaders in spear-heading the movement for democratic rights against the King. The Speaker, even in those circumstances was able to reply that he had no eyes, ears or voice, except those of the House which he was privileged to preside over. The King had to withdraw, unsuccessful in his mission. Now look at the picture our Speakers presented during the emergency. They agreed to suspend all the rules of procedure, thus taking away the valuable rights of the members to ventilate public grievances and canvass matters of public interest on the floor of the House. They did not even raise their little finger against the blanket ban put by Government on publication of the parliamentary proceedings in the press. Our Presiding authorities are never tired of asking for special privileges in rank, precedence, emoluments and other amenities, but they forgot that previleges always go with special obligations to the House and the people at large. They just remained innocuous and helpless. If they had functioned properly with firmness and strength, they could have done much to stop the worsening situation.

Then comes the press, which I am afraid barring a very few notable exceptions played a very dismal role in those dark days. They never protested, and by and large preferred to abide by Government's directives, written or otherwise, forgetting their special position in a democratic setup and their obligations to the people. They claim to be the fourth estate of the realm and yet they behaved in a manner which hardly befits the

description. They forgot Lokr'nya Tilak, who accepted responsibility for an article written by someboc'y' else published in his newspaper Kesari and preferred to go to jail on that account. They also forgot B. G. Horniman and Brelvi who toiled ceaselessly for journalistic independence and a free press. As the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, Government of India, Shri L. K. Advo stated, the press in India was asked to bend but it preferred to crawl. It is pertinent to observe that the Indian press by and large did not give publicity to the proceedings of the Parliament even after they were published under the authority of the Parliament. The press would not even publish that which was legally permissible under the then existing press-densorship-rules and regulations. I remember an article written by a former Judge of the High Court Shri V. M. Tarkunde who had clearly indicated what could still be published in those censorship days. But very few bothered to pay attention to this.

#### COMMENT

Death conquers all, and when it comes who knows, politicians might reflect as they note the sudden ending of the life of H. R. Gokhale, Mrs. Gandhi's principal legal co-adjutor in her attempt to subvert the constitution and establish her tyranny in this land. And now what answer will Mr. Gokhale make in the highest tribunal for his sins of commission and of omission? Politicians might do well to reflect on that also as a practical matter of daily life, and not necessarily as something in the fardistant future. What happened to Mr. Gokhale might easily happen to anyone of them, (indeed to any human being). So think of your defence, and even better, let your deeds be such that no defence is needed.

## OPINION

Vol. XVIII

28th February 1978

No. 45

#### INDIA REVISITED

#### TAYA ZINKIN

DURING my last visit to India Mrs. Gandhi was busy splitting the Congress Party. That was eight years ago. This time, on my return, she was at it again. But this time politics have become so discredited that hardly anybody talked politics—as distinct from gossip—despite the fact that the elections due in five States would obviously be affected by the new split. The reason is simple, last time when Mrs. Gandhi split the Congress there were issues of principle at stake whereas this time her only reason was to try to stage a comeback at all cost—moreover, her motives for wanting once more to be at the helm of affairs are not clear—except on personal terms—since the most striking thing about India today is the extent of consensus.

Indeed, there are no isms, no principles, no issues at stake. The Communist Marxist Government of West Bengal is far more conservative than the Congress government of Maharashtra and has an incomparably better record of industrial peace. For the first time in Indian history, the sympathy of the public is with law and order instead of with the strikers; this makes it easier for employers and governments to be tough with the unions and the students. On the economic front everyone is agreed that first priority must go to creating employment and to developing agriculture while second priority should go to relieving industry of some of the uneccessary shackles of the red tape accumulated over decades when the government was doctrinaire, the civil servants officious and foreign exchange short. The Government, now that the Nehrus are a thing of the past, is no longer doctrinaire, and there is more than enough foreign exchange; all that remains is for civil servants to become less officious—and there are signs that the Central Government realises this.

Even Foreign Affairs and India's place in the world have ceased to be talked about; this is not surprising since relations with the super-powers have simmered down to a level of wholesome familiarity. So many Indians have been to Russia, so many more have relations in North America—particularly everybody I met seemed to have a sister in Canada, a son in California, of a cousin in Sidney not to mention uncles in Britain—that the myth of the supermen has been exploded. And of course everybody has lost a relative or a servant to the Middle East with felicitous results for the balance of payments and disastrous effects on the quality of food

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The circle is thus complete: what came from the people goes back to the people many times over.)



and service in most hotels and many private homes. Thus at the Taj in Bombay, room service has become practically non-existant for lack of staff so that the Management might do better to admit failure and advise patrons not to have breakfast in their rooms; and one of Bombay's most delicious hostesses blamed the leatheriness of her roast ducks on the fact that she had just lost three cooks to Dubai in quick succession. In Kerala the flood of remittances is beginning to disfigure the countryside. Instead of following the traditional and beautiful pagoda syle, Kerala's greatest architectural contribution to Asian architecture, people are vying with each other to build garish concrete monstrosities which clash against their lush surroundings like painted elephants would in the North Pole.

Incidentally talking about the sad inroads of the "new" on the traditional "old", I was much agrieved to see that bell-bottomed trousers are displacing saris even in the villages of Gujarat, not to mention what goes on in the towns-and for the men, even in remote Orissa, bell-bottoms are as common, if not more than dhotis. Is the unisex look going to sweep over India? I remember the days when, because my hair was short and because I wore slacks, I used to have problems getting accepted by village women in the more backward areas; no longer. The sad day has indeed come when Hindu ladies in the metropolis can be seen wearing bare shouldered dresses in the evening and short skirts with tank tops during the day. Gone are the days when I could type Indians by their clothes. Now everybody looks alike-polyester cotton mixed saris are the same everywhere; the same colours, the same borders, only the tucking between the legs still differs. And everywhere except for adibasis and excriminal tribes, the polyester cotton shirt—at 30 to 40 rupees each—and the bell-bottomed trousers have displaced the dhoti. The turban, that picturesque headgear has more or less vanished, like the adjkhan and the Gandhi cap-people now go bareheaded and use far less cloth. This sartorial change—trousers only require 2½ yards instead of 6 for a sari and four for a dhoti-is reflected in the drop of the average per capita consumption of cloth, although most economists have failed to draw the obvious conclusion that, with mixed fibres this drop represents an increase in the standard of living since the investment like the durability and the convenience is higher than with conventional cotton.

This brings me to one of the obvious developments that the government ought to foster: namely the shift to mixed man-made fibres for the Khadi and Handloom weaving industries. To expect villages to continue to spin and weave cotton as in the past is to condemn them to continuous poverty. Man-made fibres do not break like cotton so that much time is saved in weaving and the cloth produced is so much stronger and easier to wash that it sells at a premium. Incidentally, the switch to mixed fibres combined with the increase in the cost of living since I was in India last, has given rise to a new industry: Dry Cleaning. Dry cleaners have mushroomed everywhere, even in small towns, because so many people wash their clothes at home using dhobis only to iron. When things get really dirty they are sent, as in the West, to be dry cleaned. I would



be surprised if, when I next visit India, and if government policy makes it possible, automatic launderettes of the kind so ubiquitous in the West, are not flourishing in the cities—after all, from Cape Comorin to Jammu I found Milk Bars!

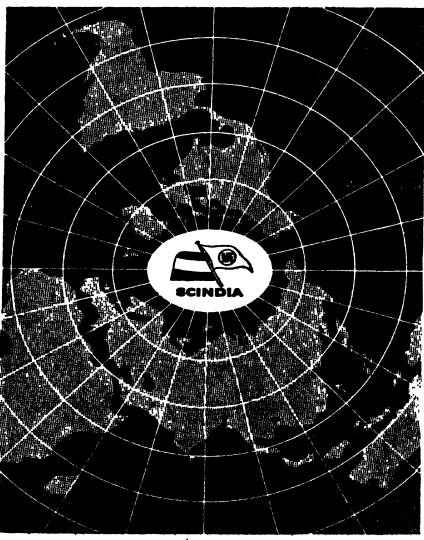
Change, once it creeps in grows by leaps and bounds like Jack's beanstalk. If a girl from a good Hindu family can cut off her hair, wear short skirts or blue jeans and a tight sleeveless bodice, not to mention makeup, and look sexy, as so many now do whether they be the daughters of Saraswat Brahmins or of small town Banias, the day has come when tradition no longer matters: food habits are in the melting pot, indeed so are traditional marriages. People may still prefer their parents to arrange, but the shopping list will, more and more be made up by the bride and the groom and I feel that the day is within sight when parents will be asked to arrange inter caste marriages.

I have strayed into one of my hobby-horses but my excuse is that during what was alas too short, and too whirlwind a tour of India, I have gathered so many impressions that it would almost require a book to do them justice while to write a book one needs more facts than it was possible to collect in five crammed weeks.

Of one thing I feel sure. Things in India are better than ever before. People are better fed, better clad, they look healthier, beggars are fewer and there are fewer favellas than I remember from the past. The increase in population has obviously been absorbed by a greater increase in the national income even if that increase is only greater by one per Indeed I suspect that statistics do not reflect reality. It is not just what happens when people switch over to mixed fibres, but the fact that they seem to have done so almost all over India which shows a real increase in the standard of living And more roads are tarred and provided with culverts than ever before Indeed parts of the Deccan which I remember bare are now lush and green with sugar cane because electrification has made irrigation possible. Some of those villagers who have no land in Maharashtra have cross-bred cows and make a living from selling the milk they now grow in their backyard Improved cows have become such a familiar sight that they rank in my mind at least, with Mexican dwarf wheat. And speaking of Mexican dwarf wheat I have been told that the reason for which water hyacinths which used to be the scurge of Bengal-have appeared everywhere is that some hyacinth seeds got mixed into the wheat. This explanation may of course not be true but what is true is that water hyacinth—like Mexican dwarf wheat—has spread to most of India. There has in addition been a white revolution what with 220,000 crossbred cows in Kerala of all places, where my last memories of milk were mostly from tins or coconuts. And the improved seeds one hears so much about in the Punjab are far more widespread and varied than it is fashionable to think; nor indeed is it true that the green revolution benefits the Kulak more than the little man.

On the contrary, I would argue that the reverse is true since the difference between poverty and comfort is far greater than between com-

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fort and wealth. Thus, in the district of Chingleput, we ran into what looked like a landless labourer and stopped him to ask what his daily wage was. The story of that man illustrates better than anything I saw in India how wrong economists and planners can be. 'Seven years ago this man was indeed a landless labourer working for a daily wage. When his employers decided to move and sell their two acres of dry land. he saved a little money and managed to borrow the rest from friends and caste fellows to buy the two acres. With a total of Rs. 10,000 (at 24% interest) he paid for the land, sank a 60 ft. tube-well and grew two crops of IR8 rice. By now, seven years later, he still had 3,000 rupees to repay but was going to deepen his well by another 10 feet so that he could grow a third crop and when I asked him why he did not borrow from a bank at 18 per cent he said banks were far too cumbersome and time consuming whereas his friends were understanding and would not press him in a bad year. Moreover, being alone he valued the time saved by not hanging around banks. What was so cheering about this man was that he was full of initiative; he had gone to get seeds and fertilisers from the Block Development Office five miles away, nobody had approached him; he was planning a third crop off his own bat and he had incidentally, without any of Sanjay's nonsense, gone to be sterilised of his own accord because he already had three children AND HE WAS ILLI-TERATE! Now there is a lot to be learnt for the Government from that story, the moral of which is that God helps those who help themselves, All that Governments can do is provide the electricity (or the water), the improved seeds, the fertilisers, the credit preferably in a less cumbersome way, and let economic factors govern the price of agricultural production without undue interference such as zonal barriers. The enterprisinglarge or small-will do the rest To try and improve the lot of those who are lazy, fatalistic and apathetic is to pour resources down the drain. Take Bihar for instance: the water is just there below the ground for the scratching and the soil, the alluvium of the Ganges, is one of the most fertile in the world. Yet the green revolution has not touched Bihar and Biharis are content to migrate as labourers to the Punjab where the soil is 75 per cent sand but where hard work and enterprise have achieved the kind of miracle that one sees in Israel where people work hard to help themselves in sharp contrast to their desert neighbours.

And the Chingleput farmer was not unique. In the Deccan we met a farmer whom we mistook for a beggar because of his venerable appearance. He had turned his five acres into a source of income—three under sugar cane and two under lucerne, which makes him as well off as any except the most senior, or the most corrupt of district officials. And our taxi driver in Orissa was supplementing his income by selling the milk of the three improved cows he kept in his garage where they were stallfed. In Andhra we met a farming entrepreneur who is actually exporting improved seeds to Japan and the United States; under his supervision any local farmer can, subcontracted and supervised by him, make as much as Rs. 60,000 net per acre per anxium on multiplying his seeds. Nor do people



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need to have land to prosper if they have initiative. For instance, the driver we used to have when we lived in Bombay took advantage of the credit facilities for small enterprises—perhaps Mrs. Gandhi's best scheme—and bought himself a taxi; by now it is fully paid up and he has purchased a second taxi for his son and, allowing for interest and repayment of this second loan as well as depreciation, maintenance and petrol, between the two of them they net from Rs. 100 to Rs. 150 a day. And as I am prepared to bet they pay hardly any tax this makes them, since theirs is a joint family set-up, practically as well off as a University Professor. Moreover, to quote our ex-driver, they have free use of the cars and only work when they feel like it.

Enterprise, everywhere is being rewarded, most of all in the rural and the self-employed sectors. One of the results of the educational explosion which has taken place in India over the last quarter century is the erosion of the taboos of caste. In 1960, shortly before we left, a young Brahmin from Maharashtra had applied to my husband for a job with Hindustan Lever. The only job going at the time—he was a matriculate Chitpawan-was that of peon. He would have taken it had his mother not pointed out that if he did, since office peons also have to serve tea, his sisters would have to remain single. He apologetically backed out and presumably went to swell the pool of "educated" unemployed. Today, however, it has become perfectly in order for University Graduates in Economics belonging to a high caste, to work as porters at the Taj or as waiters in the restaurants of any five star hotel, because with tips they will net as much as an assistant collector which presumably now makes it possible for their sisters to find husbands. Incidentally, this new attitude to newly permissible occupations deals a fatal blow to the general Indian reluctance for manual work and the Indian engineer's old allergy to the "dirty hand" method; it even may, who knows, weaken one day the barriers of caste.

Everywhere we went, we found tradition under attack. We were told that in Benares, in winter at least, only the elderly dip in the Ganges—the young are too scared of catching cold. And one of our Bengali friends has accepted his son's choice of a bride in what is so prohibited a family degree that the couple had to go to Ceylon to get married. Girls now share "Chummeries" with boys in the metropolitan cities—as indeed they do in the West, without any tongue wagging; the daughter of one of our oldest friends has gone into "films", a venture open without scandal in the past only to those related to Tagore.

Speaking of film, the most remarkable change of mood we noticed was watching "Manthan", the film made by Shyam Benegal for the Kaira Milk Co-operative Society. This film, which was presumably intended to publicise the formation of milk co-operatives is about the effects of new opportunities on inter-caste tension in rural conditions. What was so fascinating, at least to them, was that the villain looked, dressed and behaved like the traditional Congressman, whereas the heroes, the veterans and the co-operative experts—were bush-shirted young executives



with perhaps too much idealism to appreciate the subleties of village imperatives. Indeed, watching them insist on making Untouchables and caste Hindus stand in the same milk delivery line reminded me of what happened in 1952 when I visited famine relief schemes in Rayalseema. Caste Hindus queued for a relief soup which was thick and nutritious whereas the Harijans were queueing for watery gruel. Imbued with the spirit of the Constitution, I virtuously insisted on swopping the queues round to the consternation of all concerned. That evening when I called on the Collector, himself a Harijan, he gave me hell. I had upset the village norms and left the Harijans to face the caste music. So too, in Manthan", the young idealist's misconceived notions led to the burning town of the Harijan village.

(To be continued)

#### DIAMOND-BRIGHT, DIAMOND-HARD

Consider this masterly indictment against the judges by Denzil Holles on the July, 1641: "Were our persons forced and imprisoned by an act of power, would the law relieve us when we appealed unto it? No, it would join hands with violence, and add bitterness to our sorrow. These judges would not hear us when we did cry; no importunity could get a Habeas Corpus; nay, our cries would displease them and them would beat us for crying."

It is one thing not to remove erring judges, another to exalt them.

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## OPINION

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No. 50

#### **COMMENT**

THE report out of sight, and consequently, out of mind, would seem to be the proper description of the findings of the Commission on Bansi Lal's misdemeanours. The last that was heard of it was that it had been transmitted by the Government of India to the Haryana Government for action. After that, silence? Surely it is about time action was taken on the specific matters the Commission has commented on. A special judge should be appointed to hear the cases from day to day and come to quick conclusions. To allow matters of this kind to drift, to adopt a lecadasical attitude tomards them is to bring the law into contempt, to deny justice to the aggrieved, to encourage and strengthen the culprits, to set a premium upon wrong-doing. There is surely telephonic communication between Delhi and Candigarh and the best way of expediting results would probably be for the Law Minister of the Government of India to ask to be informed every evening by the Law Minister of the Government of Haryana of the progress made in the matter. Tut, tut, against all routine, it may be said, but has not enough laxity prevailed? Is it not time for an end to routine? Must it not be recognised even now that the public interest is paramount?

One feature of the Janata Government at the Centre is the very little talk of dishonesy among its members. Even the usual rumour-mongering atmosphere of Delhi seemed to be free of it. We cannot conclude from this that there is no corruption at all at the top-level of Government. But it is safe to hold that it has been greatly reduced. Quite an achievement, it would appear, and one for which the sadly-belaboured Government has received little credit. Who knows, if progress continues along these lines for some years, we may be able to point to our Government with pride as one of the few honest governments of the world. This writer looks forward eagerly to the time when the general public will be able to treat with scorn any suggestion that any member of the Government of India could be bribed, when the answer to any devious suggestions from interested foreigners will be "Think again, friend. This is India. Nothing of that kind works here."

To have an honest Government is the first step towards having an an honest nation. It seems a dream, but who knows, even that height

may be scaled. The moral sense of the citizenry, the second of the two essentials of good government, may be so fired by the personal integrity of the rulers, the first essential, that almost all the dross of the Indian character may be burnt up, and the Indian may become the truly honest man, which by and large, he can scarcely be said to be today. "You have obviously dined too well tonight," says an old friend. "Such euphoria! I feel that you are really old now, and so, in snatches, pass beyond the region of common sense and see visions." "Well, that may be," said this writer, "But don't forget the old song, Happy days will be here again; the again may be redundant, there having been none in the past, but the rest of the line may still come true."

Even the utter crass folly of Prohibition ceases to anger one who has spent the larger part of each day for three weeks in the shade of an enormous green tree, looking out on greenness all around. Dozing and reading, gazing lazily at birds and squirrels, sipping and nibbling, very occasionally writing, morning turned into afternoon, afternoon into evening, and then with a sigh one went into human society, and adjusted one's mind to the topics of the day, not always successfully, judging by the surprise and sometimes disapprobation, with which one's remarks and silences were often received. Now back to Prohibition, futile, wasteful, corrupting, vicious Prohibition, a make-believe of the highest order, a hypocritical masquerade. And so say all of us in our private moments. But if you are a sanctimonious Chief or other Minister, in public you proclaim the merits of prohibition, the good that will come out of it, even your ability to enforce it, in spite of all past experience. So prohibition is now national policy again and who dare say nay to it? Only people of integrity who have the courage to stand up and be counted, by their very nature, few, and occasional enthusiasts, who can be disposed off as cranks.

[The following, of twenty-two years ago, is very relevant to this period of uncertainty and transition]:

WOULD Gautama have approved the spending of about two and half crores of rupees to celebrate any occasion, however auspicious? Clearly he would not have. Such conduct would have seemed to him to be related to that one of the two extremes that he deprecated, "luxury, low, vulgar, common, ignoble and useless". Indeed his greatness lay in rejecting all extremes. He was equally opposed to "self-torture, painful, ignoble and useless".

The enlightenment of the Middle Path was what he taught, the Middle Path being attained by eight steps, right understanding, right purpose, right speech, right conduct, right vocation, right effort, right alertness, right concentration.

Gautama held that everyone's salvation consisted of, and depended entirely on, modification and growth of his own inner nature and that these could be brought about only by the individual's own self-control and diligence. Briefly, character was the key to salvation. All of us, including those who do not accept the Buddhist view of existence as unhappiness caused by continuous selfish craving, can well accept the emphasis on the building up of character that is, in the Buddha's teaching, the cure for the evils attendant on life, and indeed for life itself.

There is no lack of ability among the inhabitants of this country. Human resources of a high order of ingenuity can be easily found. Of material resources too, it has almost all. What it lacks above everything is character in its people. Whether among the Government few or the commercial many, the professions or the arts, the principal failure is always in character. The blind demanding which Gautama saw as the cause of all human unhappiness is not only not suppressed, but seems to be stronger now than even in the recent past. It takes various forms, the love of power, the desire for riches, the interest in intrigue, the hatred of rivals, the inability to bear frankness, the dislike of good advice. Yet in each it is harmful to its harbourer, and through his thoughts and actions to the world around him. Also the more important and significant his position, the greater the harm that is caused.

This week then might well be spent by all of us, and more especially by those in leading positions among us, in deep and humble introspection into our acts and thoughts, with a view to recognising them for what they are, admitting the error in them at least to our own naked souls, and thereby proceeding to make reparation for the past by amending thought for the future, examining ourselves, clear-sightedly and setting aside arrogance and interest, so that we may be led on to right behaviour.

Another lesson too of Buddha's seems peculiarly appropriate to us in this country at the present time. Our future depends indeed upon the avoidance of unnecessary speculation, the recognition of our real tasks, and concentration upon fulfilling them. Rightly did Gautama say: "Whether the dogma obtain, Malunkyaputta, that the world is eternal or that the world is not eternal, there still remains old age, death, sorrow, lamentation, misery, grief and despair." These were the problems to which he thought men ought to apply their minds and which they ought to conquer through the improvement of their character. Their manifestation in various forms and guises are present amongst us in innumerable strength. They provide essentially the raw material of politics, government and social change. The recognition by the powerful of these as our real tasks in preference to interesting flights of fancy and heartwarming wishful thinking, and concentration by them on the solution of the problems they give rise to, leading to the betterment of the condition of the people as a whole, would be perhaps the most worth while gift they could make to the Buddha's memory.

The tracedy of all religions is the tragedy of human incapacity. Spontancity soon gets lost in the institutionalism with which men seek to cover the essential faith. Buddhism, too, has become a church, wide-pread and powerful. Yet right up to the last did Buddha call for self-reliance. His deepest appeal was always to the unconquerable spirit of Man. "Those who shall be a lamp unto themselves, relying upon themselves only and not relying upon any external help, but holding fast to the truth as their lamp, and seeking their salvation in the truth alone, it is they who shall reach the very topmost heights"

"The seas are quiet, when the winds give o'er; So calm are we when passions are no more For them we know how vain it was to boast Of fleeting things so certain to be lost Clouds of affection from our younger eyes Conceal that emptiness that age descries

The soul's dark cottage, batter'd and decay'd,
Lets in new light through chinks that Time hath made:
Stronger by weakness, wiser men become
As they draw near to their eternal home
Leaving the old, both worlds at once they view
That stand upon the threshold of the new"

"Thousands at his bidding speed And post o're Land and Ocean without rest: They also serve who only stand and wait"

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## OFINION

Vol. XVIII

18th April 1978

No. 52

#### VIOLENCE, VIOLENCE, VIOLENCE

TYPHY, oh why, has violence increased so much of late, ask in greatly aggrieved and immensely shocked voices, the mighty in the land. Good sirs, are you not aware that the virtual leader of the principal opposition party in the country has taken politics to the streets, that she sees her interest in violence, disorder, disturbance, demonstration, in everytring that hampers the smooth working of Government, and arouses dislike and contempt for it? Also are you not aware that she has enormous resources in men and money? Further, do you not know that she is skilled beyond the ordinary in both political strategy and political tactics, and that she has already shown more than once that she can make rings round the Government? In addition to all this are you ignorant of the fact that power to her is as the breath of life, that she cannot live in the real sense without it, that in order to be safe she has to have it, lest she be engulfed in matters arising from Commissions' reports, to say. nothing of her well-beloved son, whom too she must protect from the consequences of his many and grave misdeeds? It is not surprising then that she sees in violence, disruption and corruption her best weapons. A word here a messenger there, an incident blown-up, a grievence rekindled, all, all is grist to her mill. So, do not be shocked that there is much more violence now; be prepared rather for further increase in it with each advance in her position. .

Remember too that she is different from you and all ordinary people in her concept of politics. To you politics is important certainly, but it is only one part of life. To her politics is all. As to the hard-line Communist, to her too everything is within its ambit. So, it may not be wrong to put down to her at least seventy per cent of the increase in violence. But, but, you will say, this cannot go on, something must be done, otherwise we, even more, the country, will be ruined. A late realisation, if it comes, but a welcome one all the same. And act now, act, there is no time to spare. What is happening is in large part the consequence of your not seeing people and things as they were and are. With rosy spectacles you looked upon her, and all you could see was charm and suffering, error and innocence. The Spanish proverb is very applicable, 'God says do what you like, and pay for it.' For your mis-

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The circle is thus complete: what came from the people goes back to the people many times over-



placed consideration and overwhelming complacency, you may have to pay hereafter, who knows, but the country is paying for them in ample measure to-day.

#### **PROHIBITION**

66 THE policy of total prohibition is usually advocated on one or more of three distinguishable grounds: moral, social and economic. We shall deal with each of these separately; but it is necessary to point out, at the outset, that no measure of reform, whether moral, social or economic, can, in regard to the desirability of launching it, be judged on its purely ideological content. For the object of reform is not to subscribe to an ideal but to bring about certain results related to that ideal may be the heart of religion, but practicability is the essence of reform. The practicability of any big measure undertaken by the State depends, among other things, on the money that can be made available and the personnel that can be brought into action. When both these are limited, the results cannot be those hoped for in the abstract. It is, therefore, in the light of the particular results likely to be achieved, and not on the assumption of the complete success of the measure of reform, that policy must be examined, adopted and implemented. The Constitution of India, it will be noticed, while providing for the prohibition of intoxicating drinks, as one of the various aims to be pursued by the State advisedly says that the aim is one which the State shall "endeavour to bring about". The relative pace of the endeavour is necessarily a matter of priorities; the allocation of priorities having relation not merely to the specific items competing for accommodation within the resources of an individual State, but also to the other very important aims, the pursuit of which is laid down by the Constitution as a directive principle of State policy. Unlike, in the case of prohibition, time limit is prescribed by the Constitution in respect of some of these other aims, e.g., a period of ten years for the provision of free and compulsory education for children. It seems to us, moreover, that the comprehensiveness of the aims set down by the Constitution and the individual importance of some of them is not always sufficiently realised. To cite only a few, the State is enjoined, as a present duty (and not as a matter of graduated endeavonr), to make provision for securing just and humane conditions of work, and for maternity relief. The State is also to try to ensure a living wage and a decent standard of life for all workers, agricultural, industrial or other-Measures are to be taken for protecting the scheduled castes and the scheduled tribes from social injustices and all forms of exploitation. Last but not least, among these examples, is the directive to bring about an improvement of public health and to raise the level of nutrition and the standard of living of the people of India. In the context, finally, of this multiplicity of aims, all of which cannot, for obvious reasons, be achieved together and within a short time, and, secondly, of the paucity of resources of the State, the prospects of finding the men and money needed for the satisfactory enforcement of a programme of prohibition,





assuming that one is adopted in the near future, must be adjudged to be very poor indeed. In other words, enforcement of the requisite standard is not a practicable proposition. Without proper enforcement, the reform remains for the most part on paper. Ideology is subscribed to; prohibition drains the State of revenue, while illicit distillation drains the people of both money and morale. It is against these practical effects, which we apprehend, that evaluation has to be attempted of the moral, social and economic content of the proposed measure of reform.

About the relative or inherent value to be attached to a particular item of morality, in this case abstinence from liquor, we do not propose to dilate For the present purposes and in the light of the Constitution which India has adopted, we shall argue on the basis that the moral value of prohibition is not in question. But a programme of moral reform to which the State is ultimately committed, may itself be susceptible, as in this case, of being divided into different sections in the logical sense, and of different stages in the chronological sense. It seems to us that that type of immorality which affects the well-being, not merely of the immoral person, but also of those around him and of the public in general, must take precedence in the programme of the State. In other words, drunkenness which results in a public brawl must obviously be prevented or punished, and so must the drunken behaviour of the head of a family who beats his wife and children. The State must, of course, try to secure these objects as effectively as it can Between an object of this kind and that of attempting presently to impose, by legislation, an ultimate form of morality—like that of non-participation in drink—on an unprepared public, there seems to us to be an important difference. The difference is one of priorities. As an object of State action, ultimate morality can only have ultimate priority.

The social aspect of prohibition may be examined in relation to the most important unit of society, viz., the family. Drink has undoubtedly been responsible, on occasion, for the loosening of family ties among the well-to-do and for physical tyranny over wife and children among the poor. But, in this country generally, the percentage of such cases to the total number of families unaffected by drink is, to the best of our belief, negligible. To endeavour to eliminate the social harm done by drink, even in the relatively few cases to which it is confined, is undoubtedly a very desirable aim, but it cannot be placed even remotely as high as certain other social ends which also call for money and effort, such as the elimination of the social injustice done to the scheduled castes and scheduled tribes, or the rectification of the social inequalities imposed on women, or the amelioration of the social conditions and education of backward, neglected or exploited children In the social sense, too, prohibition is not a reform which can be assigned any high priority.

The economic argument is the crux of the case for prohibition. Briefly, the contention is that the State taxes the poor by tempting them to drink; that the withdrawal of drink will, therefore, automatically enrich the poor and increase their standard of living; and that such enrichment and



improvement will in various ways be of great economic benefit to the State as a whole. It may, in the first place, be noticed that this argument does not, and validly cannot, concern itself with the rich since such of these as drink, cannot be said to be doing any economic harm to themselves or any considerable economic injury to the community at large, though their act may be considered immoral. In any case, their number is small. As regards the poor, there is undoubtedly a certain amount of validity in the economic argument; but here again, the validity is directly proportionate to the actual enforceability of the programme of prohibition. If, by and large, the effect of prohibition is to divert custom from the quondam Government shop to the clandestine one provided by the illicit distiller, and, therefore, to make the poor man pay more money for worse drink, Government merely loses its revenue without any corresponding gain to the income of the poor. Nor is there any reason to feel confident that, in those cases where prohibition has actually resulted in abstinence, the income thus saved is largely utilised for purposes which can be regarded as of economic value to the community at large. Along with drink, have to be eliminated a number of other equally or more pernirious objects of expenditure which are attractive to the common man, before results of enduring value, in the economic sense, can be expected to be realised. These, then, are some of the very substantive qualifications which detract from the force of the economic argument."

There is no strong public opinion against those who drink, despite all the propaganda by our governments over all the years. Even the most respectable and law-abiding do not think it a part of their duty to apprise the authorities of breaches of the Prohibition law or even to condemn them. Prohibition means throwing away government revenue, (estimated variously from two to three thousand crores), increasing government expenditure (about three to five hundred crores on enforcement plus from one thousand to fifteen hundred crores on grants to states as part compensation), without really stopping the people from drinking. In the circumstances, can there be any doubt that the correct policy would be to abandon Prohibition in the areas where it has been introduced, taking care to popularise temperance as vigorously as possible? Would that common-sense were not so uncommon a quality in high governmental and legislative circles! Perhaps then it might even come to be recognised that love of power does far more harm than love of wine.

Nothing has been said above about the goodness of wine, about the benefits its moderate use confers on mankind, benefits which so impressed Jamshid two thousand years ago that when it first appeared in his court under the name of "zehr" (poison), he, after tasting it said, "call it not 'zehr' (poison) rather call it 'daru' (the remedy)." On this aspect much can be said (and has in the past been said, even in Opinion). In this last issue of Volume XVIII, let us however avoid even the least touch of enthusiasm or euphoria. This is above all a plea for sobriety and sanity. God's mercy be upon you, Great Ones, and his grace enlighten your minds!

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IMISON'S 341

#### VIEW

VLADIMIR BUKOVSKY: Recently, during the celebration of the 60th anniversary of Soviet power in Moscow, somebody paid a very shaky compliment to Mr Brezhnev, "Comrade Brezhnev," he said, "In your seventy years, you look much younger than your country at sixty."

And, really, sixty years of Communist power has brought the country to a desperate situation—backward technology, devastated agriculture, the lowest living standard in Europe, and the absence of human rights. Crime and alcoholism have reached unbelievable heights.

Given this record of failure, how can we explain why the Soviet regime not only remains in power but holds half of the world in fear and forces you to spend billions of dollars in armaments?

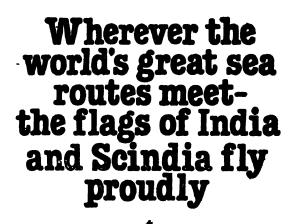
For one thing, the psychological situation created by Soviet propaganda has not changed much since Stalin's time; as before, all Soviet citizens from childhood on are saturated with the idea that the Soviet Union finds itself in a capitalist encirclement, hostile and aggressive. It is enough to point out that any person who tries to flee abroad or refuses to return to the USSR is considered by Soviet law to be a traitor, a deserter who has gone over to the enemy. The Soviet Union, loudly demanding a cessation of the so-called "cold war," when talking about Western Countries, fully preserves the climate of the cold war within its own borders. For decades the idea has been suggested to Soviet man that he has no right to demand improvements in the conditions of his life, no right to demand the observance of human rights, since this is "grist for the enemy's mill" and is used by the enemy to weaken the country. Such an artificially created atmosphere is vitally essential to uphold the Communist dictatorship and is inseparable from it.

In 1962, in Novocherkassk, the workers went on strike because their pay was cut and prices were raised on food at the same time. The workers and their families went to the City Soviet building with a petition. This was a totally peaceful procession, but it was met with machine gun fire. Dozens of people were killed and wounded. The organizers, including the women among them, were later condemned to be shot or to fifteen years of imprisonment.

Ir 1976, in the city of Riga, four workers were sentenced to up to three years after a strike called forth by the lack of meat in the stores.

The Soviet Union has signed various international conventions recognizing the right of workers to strike, but it has not bothered to formulate this right in its own legislation. Moreover, a strike is regarded as a "grcss group violation of public order," for which one can be imprisoned for up to three years. This is for a completely peaceful strike, merely for refusal to work. But methods of struggle such as sit-downs, picketing, etc., are punished according to the article entitled "mass disorders," with sentences up to fifteen years or the death penalty.

The fictitious Soviet labour unions exist to prevent a real workers' movement from springing up. They do not protect the workers from





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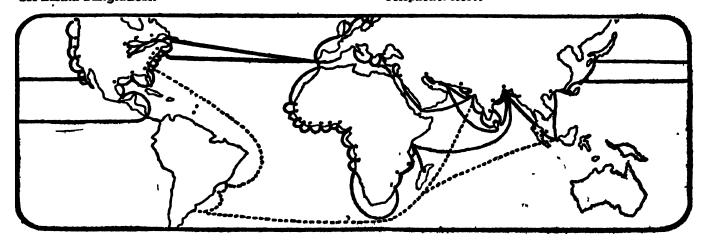
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MADRAS • BOMBAY • HYDERABAD DELHI • ERNAKULAM hunger, arbitrary rules, and exploitation. The labour unions in the USSR are part of the party and governmental apparatus and they are not concerned with the protection of working people but with the carrying out of party governmental plant.

More than anything else the Soviet press writes about strikes and une imployment in the West, creating a strange impression among Soviet workers. Many of them seriously believe that you are dying of hunger, because in the Soviet Union only a person facing death from starvation could decide on such a desperate measure as a strike. And to be paid for not working—that is unbelievable. The authorities consider that a person is himself at fault if he cannot find work. Such people are declared to be "parasites" and are sent to Siberia to work at low-paid labour.

During its sixty years of existence, the Soviet regime has destroyed more than sixty million people—an average of one million people a year. Because of this, as you might well imagine, the spirit of Soviet workers has been to some extent broken. . . .

Accustomed to lack of rights, Soviet workers prefer to steal from their place of work anything that can be sold on the black market, in order somehow to feed their families, but they do not dare make open demands. This is very useful to the authorities, because in this way everybody is guilty and everybody can be tried, not for his political convictions, but for theft. In general, crime in the country is very wide-spread, and alcoholism, drug addiction, and prostitution flourish.

In all there are 3,000,000 prisoners in the country, a little more than one percent of the population. Such a high percentage of convicts is artificially supported by the government, mainly out of economic considerations.

A prisoner is cheap labour, which can easily be shifted by the authorities from one branch of the economy to another, sent to do the most difficult and unprofitable work in underdeveloped parts of the country with a difficult climate, to which free labour could be attracted only by offering very high pay.

## OPINION

Vol. XIX

2nd May 1978

No. 1

#### AN ADULT FAIRY TALE

U. A.

O NCE UPON A TIME there was a little fisher boy named Raju who lived in a quiet coastal village not far from a large city. The little boy was only six, but already he was different. He was always first out of bed, tacking the sails and spreading the nets. And he was always the last to come back from sea, helping his father to bring back an enormous catch of fish. And late at night when everyone else was asleep, he would sit in the scrub, below the palms adjoining the main road and watch the cars go by. "One day" he would say to himself, "I too shall be rich".

Raju was not only an intelligent young man, he was far-sighted and patient as well. Year after year he worked and planned. By strength and guile he advanced, till one day he was the village headman. Now he had the biggest hut in the village and the prettiest young girl for miles around was his wife. But his heart was not at rest. Night after night, he would leave home and wife to go and look at the cars. One night his father found him blinking at the headlights and swatting gnats. "What's the matter with you boy" roared the patriarch, "you get the the best fish, don't you? Your wife is still firm and your house has two chairs. What more do you want?" "Cars" said Raju, "I want a car".

That night the idea came to him and it came to him whole. He was so excited he could hardly wait for the night to end. And when dawn came, he gathered the village round him and made a speech. "My people" he said, "We work, we slave and what happens? Are we rich? No! The truth is people don't want fish. They want something else and we must give it to them". He went on to outline a plan that would turn the village into a big distillery. "But the police" said an old man sitting at the edge of the crowd. "The police will catch us, they will beat us. Then they will kill us". Raju sighed. "Ah, yes the police. We must do something about that."

The next morning he walked to the local police station two miles away and asked to see the highest authority. Raju was a poor man and dressed as a fisherman does. But the Superintendent did not keep him waiting. He saw him almost immediately. Raju was a little surprised. He told the policeman so. The Superintendent looked stern. "For us there is neither high nor low", he said fruitily. "We are the law. In our

In Trast For The People... The entire wealth gathered by the Founder of Tata Enterprises, and his sons and successors, over almost a century of industrial pioneering is bequeathed to Tata philanthropic trusts and foundations.

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eyes, all men are equal". Raju got down to business. The Superintendent looked like a reasonable man. He was. In less than half an hour they had reached a working agreement. That year Raju bought his first car.

Then one day, many years afterwards a terrible thing happened. A few hours after dinner the police raided the village. Luckily there was little to be found. The villagers preferred to work openly in broad daylight. The night was for sleeping. Still there were four enterprising establishments doing overtime. Their apparatus was smashed, the liquor dumped into the sea. Nine people were arrested. The shock was terrible. Raju called a meeting at midnight. But little was said After all the police were all-powerful. One could reach an agreement with them. But one could not oppose them openly. In a test of strength the police would always win. The situation seemed hopeless.

Now Raju was an exceptionally intelligent young man. And the next day as he set out for the police-station his step was firm, his eye was bright. The police were after all maintained by the tax payer. And he was now a tax payer. He was more. He maintained the police directly. He walked in to confront the superintendent. "Son of a pregnant sow", said Raju succinctly. The superintendent blenched and shifted his eyes uneasily. "Murderer of unborn children". The superintendent shuffled and wheezed "Now, now now. . . ."

"Do we pay you three thousand rupees a month to kill us?" The superintendent gurgled helplessly. He explained. In the old days things were simple. Each district had its police-station. This police station was solely responsible for maintaining law and order in the district. But things had changed. It was now possible for a police station to raid outside its own district. This was done to prevent corruption in the police force. It was all a dark plot amongst the "higher-ups". "It's not our fault" the superintendent concluded, "Can we help if if the Government is growing tyrannical. We did nothing. They did".

Raju was dumbfounded. The dark machinations of the "higher-ups", astounded him. The tyranny of this Government was beyond compare. Still something had to be done. "Very well", he said "I have reached my decision. Tomorrow we go on strike. We go back to the sea".

"What!" the superintendent was plainly indignant.

"We go back to the sea", repeated Raju, "Tomorrow morning we shall spread our nets. The sea is a hard mistress but she is a fair one."

The superintendent sat speechless with anxiety.

"It is no longer a good arrangement", Raju said, "we cannot pay you three thousand rupees and be raided as well. It is not fair. It is not natural. It is against nature."

"Now, now, now", said the superintendent. He was a sensible man with three children. The eldest boy would soon leave for America to





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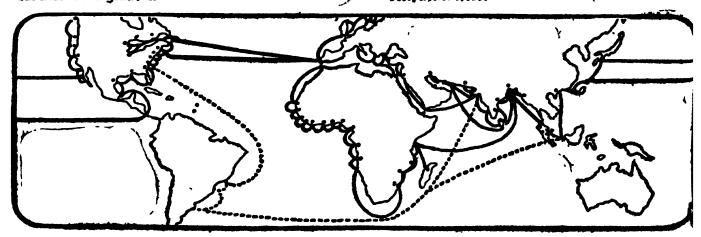
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study Mechanical Engineering. "We'll work something out. Now don't go away. I'll be right back". And he exited speedily to confer with his minions.

Ten minutes later he returned smiling happily, armed with a plan. "We cannot stop the other policemen from raiding you. But we can warn you. In time. We'll have a force of six men keeping watch day and night. You'll get advance notice of at least half an hour if there is to be a raid."

Raju thought it over. The superintendent had always been honest with him. There was no reason to believe that he was cheating him now. Besides he had still not bought his third car. So, Raju put his arm around the policeman's shoulders and led him back to the village to spread the happy news.

That night the superintendent got very drunk, went home, beat his wife and snored contentedly afterwards. And the simple fisherfolk danced around their fire in simple rustic joy as the great blank stars smiled down pitilessly.

And they all lived happily ever after.

(This Prohibition classic first appeared in the Special Number for 1963)

### CONVERSATIONS IN A TAXI

#### GAURI DESHPANDE

TOT being even remotely gregarious by nature, I had always preferred going to Poona by train, rather than in a taxi. After all, one can always read Freud's Psychopathology of Everyday Life on the train (a more popular book won't do, as your fellow traveller will most probably have read it, and may want to hold a seminar on its worth). But, I felt, in the confines of a taxi, crushed up close to two or three people, sharing the many (palpable) dangers that one faces on the ghats from man-eating trucks, one will have to converse more or less amicably with all who share the taxi. However, an emergency did force me to travel by taxi once, and to my delight I found that most people were as disinclined to talk as I was and quite fifty per cent of them preferred to catch up on their sleep, along with my small daughter. This joy was short lived, because on my next trip I was accompanied by my elder daughter, whom I have now discovered to be of the material that "leaders" are made of. She is indefatigable in her efforts to improve mankind, or at any rate the section of it that its misfortune throws in her way. After the first trip in her company, during which I pretended to be suffering from sunstroke. I had to admonish her severely not to butt in on other people's conversations with a view to directing their thoughts into better channels. She now satisfies herself by making audible remarks based on their con-



versations, ostensibly in my ear. As she is still of an ignorable age, things might not have become too embarrassing had not the emergency given her thoughts a very zealous push in the direction against it. I have never been able to discover exactly how and why she came to be so vehemently opposed to Mrs. Gandhi, as during the entire unhappy time she was cloistered in a boarding school. However, there it is, and the moment any one so much as speaks with what she considers a not sufficient degree of disgust about the emergency or about Mrs. Gandhi, up she bounces out of her seat and attacks the speaker. Since her rhetorical and factual equipment is quite often unequal to the task, I have to step in wearily, marshalling the same tired arguments, which I know to be fairly futile, as in most such cases it is an instance of 'you like that sort of a thing because you are the sort of person who likes that sort of a thing'. So I was not particularly surprised at the following conversatior between a man, who appeared to be the owner of a small trucking concern and the driver of the taxi. The third occupant was fortunately interested only on his copy of 'Cole'.

The whole thing began when we sighted an overturned milk truck. The trucker said that the milk trucks and the vegetable trucks were the real menaces on the road. The taxi driver agreed. Then the trucker turned to us and told us of the rackets that are practiced by the rascally villagers along the highways upon poor, sober and guileless truck drivers. "I have had seven trucks grounded in the last six months," he said indignantly. "Apart from the loss, I have to pay compensation for one cow, two buffalos, and one old man." I made nondescript noises, but my righteous daughter, the upholder of the Rights of the Poor, spoke up immediately: "Surely, if you did kill all those, then you must pay compensation!"

"But it wasn't my—I mean my drivers' fault!"

"But if the courts decided it was, then it was."

He got exasperated by such simplistic thinking and turned to me and said on an adult to adult basis, "You see, it is all a racket. These people know, that in the night, when the road is reasonably empty, the trucks go a bit fast. They post a chap at one end of the street where it enters a village. When he sees a truck coming a bit too fast, he signals his comrades in the village, and they shove this buffalo or cow in the middle of the street just when the truck is almost upon them. Of course there is no time to brake and the truck hits the animal and the damn thing dies before you know where you are. And then, even if it is the middle of the night, one hundred men rush out and catch hold of the driver and demand compensation. As like as not, there's a policeman in it somewhere for his little cut. Then of course the animal turns out to belong to some poor widow, who has nothing else in the world. You can see the cow is eightyeight years old and has not given a drop of milk in the past eighty, but you are assured that she used to give at least

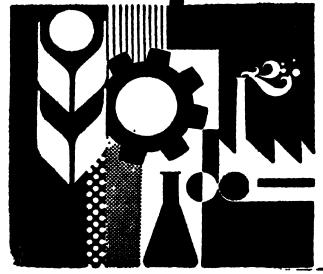
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ten litres every day, if not at every milking! If the driver is lucky, the matter goes to court. If not, he forks over whatever he has and thanks his stars that he wasn't beaten to within an inch of his life. Not that the courts can do much in the matter. The policeman says that the driver was at best speeding, at worst, drunk. The villagers all testify to the limitless worth of the cow. The hired widow comes and weeps rivers. What can the judge do but set a fine and what can I do but pay it?"

I could see my daughter was squirming in her seat to answer him. Before I could say anything, she said, "But it all might be true!"

He had no patience with such gullibility. He only looked at me pitingly for having given birth to such fools. She sensed his contempt and took another track. "And the man? Surely, he wasn't shoved under your truck!" "Well, no, he wasn't, but then what business did that doddering fool have crossing the highway in the middle of the night? I bet he was blind too, in the bargain."

Even I was moved to protest at such callousness, but our companion's practical and utilitarian philosophy was not one to balk at such trifles. He said, "But look madam, he was an old man, about to die anyway, and didn't have a soul to call his own. I know. I saw all the records. His family had all migrated to the city. They didn't care if he was alive or The kindly women in the village used to feed him scraps. But the moment he is dead, he turns out to be the chacha, mama, mausa, grandfather and great grandfather of half the damn taluka. I ask you!" This attitude robbed even my daughter of her powers of speech. I now knew with dismaying certainty which way the conversation would go. The taxi driver entered the fray, endorsing the trucker's general condemnation of humanity, and in particular of rascally villagers, corrupt policemen and weak magistrates. "And do you think the children are any better? They only follow the lead of their elders!" (Here he shot me a disapproving glance.) "They wait at the roadside and then as they see a taxi braking and changing gear to make a turn, or to stop at a tea-stall, they purposely come and bump into it, pretend some small injury and take five, ten rupees."

The trucker agreed and said sadly, "There's no discipline nowadays." "Yes, that's what it is," T.D.

"It was better during the emergency, you know!" Trucker.

I heard a gasp from my right and thought with longing of the suppression tactics used in Alice. But the Champion of Democracy pitched right in. "If discipline has to be imposed on people forcibly, and with threats of imprisonment, then what is it worth?"

"Good lord, of course discipline has to be forced! Don't you have it forced on you in school?"

His unspoken criticism of my not having forced enough discipline on her stung me into incautiously replying, "Well, I can see how you may





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MADRAS • BOMBAY • HYDERABAD DELHI • ERNAKULAM be able to distribute the rest of the country if you put half of it behind bars!"

He had no patience with such thinking. "Kya, madam! Only a few thousand at most, and those too, people like agitators, smugglers, chors! Not honest, hard-working people who had no interest in politics. Who cares about that kind? Things worked in those days, you know. Look at the stupidity of people who spend four crores of rupees to change every board on every station and road and every scrap of Government stationery from English into Marathi. Now, I have nothing against Marathi mind you, but couldn't they have waited until the old paint and the old stationery was ready for renewal anyway?"

I wanted to ask him if such stupidity was the exclusive birthright of the Janata Govt., and as it happened, Maharashtra dose not have a Janata Govt., anyway. But he answered me himself. "No sense of priorities. Now, 'she' knew what to do first. The ordinary people's life was bearable then."

I thought of all the statistics, of all the evidence before the commissions of inquiry which showed the zulm that the 'ordinary' people had suffered under, of the tens of thousands who were in jails. And then I said to myself, "Is it any use?" It is easier to be heroic in times of danger. It is very difficult to be plodding away with your statistics and your arguments while inside you are honest enough to admit that a whole lot of criticism that the man was levelling against this Govt. was valid enough. And, as I placed him in his early sixties, I also could have predicted his parting short as we got down to have our cup of tea in Khopoli. "You are too young to know anything about it, but let me tell you, people were happier during the British Raj!"

I have never been forgiven by my daughter for having burst out laughing instead of giving him an argument there and then.

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# OFINION

ol. XIX

9th May 1978

No. 2

### CONSTITUTIONAL OATHS

M. M. DAVE

THE judges in India are under a constitutional oath to perform the duties of their office "without fear or favour, affection or ill will". During the course of the entire history of the judiciary in India after independence, the time for judges to face any fear or to court favour from those in power came up only during the last Emergency. Mr. Chandrachud, the Chief Justice of India, is recently reported to have said: "I regret that I did not have the courage to lay down my office and tell the people: well, this is the law." In the same breath he is further reported to have observed that he did not want to throw dust in the eyes of the people by delivering a diluted judgement and that "autocraic onslaught on people's liberty" could not be stopped by blaming the judges. In any case, this brings out one thing very patently that conscienciously Mr. Justice Chandrachud did feel that, whether imposed legally or illegall, "autocratic onslaught on the people's liberty" was already there. But in his judgement in the Habeas Corpus case Chandrachud J. had gone to the extent of making the following observations in respect of the submissions made by the counsel for the detenues:

"Counsel after counsel expressed the fear that during the emergency the executive may whip and strip and starve the detenue and if this be our judgement, even shoot him down. Such misdeeds have not tarnished the record of free India, and I have a diamond-bright diamond-hard hope that such things will never come to pass."

Can it be said by any stretch of imagination that the above observations were in any manner in conformity with the judge's oath of acting "without fear or favour affection or ill will", and more particularly when as per his own statement as reported to have been now made, the judge was quite conscious of the "onslaught on the people's liberty?" Would it be judiciously inappropriate to presume that the judges's observations in the Habeas Corpus Case referred to above could have been made with no other object but that of pleasing those in power and chiding the detenues?

In any case, one point is clear beyond any doubt. The judge believed that the law interpreted by him according to the best of his ability, knowledge and judgement, was not in conformity with his conscience as in effect it upheld the "onslaught on the people's liberty." Should that be so, immediately on his having that belief, he ceased to have any faith and allegiance for the constitutional law as he thought it was. Any want of such "faith and allegiance" for the Constitution and the

law disqualifies the judge to hold his office, because the Constitutional oath requires that the judge "bears true faith and allegiance to the Constitution and the law". Strictly according to the law, therefore, the judge ceased to be in office when he ceased to bear true faith and allegiance to the Constitution whether he had or he lacked the courage to leave the office. A fact remains a fact and a disqualification remains a disqualification whether it may be judicially pronounced or not, and the more so when it has the support of the assertion made by the person concerned himself. The continuance of such a judge in office thus amounts to nothing but usurpation of office. But the unfortunate part of the law in our country is that:

- i) a usurper of a judicial office continues to hold the same on the plea that he had no courage to resign.
- ii) judgements given by such usurper continue to be enforced and the law as laid down by him without caring for his conscience to be a valid law binding on the entire judiciary of the land, and
- iii) on the top of all that, the usurper gets rewarded by promotion to a higher office, because he lacked the courage to resign and in addition to that he takes a fresh oath that he bears "true faith and allegiance to the Constitution" as already interpreted and established by him without caring for his conscience.

Compare this with the conduct of the British Judge who by himself had locked the High Court of Bombay and reported to the Crown that His Majesty's High Court had ceased to function in Bombay.

### A PREVALENCE OF DEER PARKS

NERGIS DALAL

WHERE have all the deer come from? Every interestate bus stop has what they call, (erroneously) a deer park, where a dozen or less deer are maintained in a fenced enclosure and where the uninterested traveller stares apathetically at the miserable animals. Whose idea is it, I wonder, to take a few deer, stick them into a small enclosure, and call it a deer park?

We even have one here in Dehra Dun, run by, of all people, the forest department! It is called an Amusement Park and Deer Park, two things which are completely antithetical, and the whole area has been planned with little imagination and less taste. We should not have to keep referring to the way they do things abroad, but it becomes necessary in this country, since if there are two ways of doing something, we are sure to choose the one that is worse. All over the world, wild life reserves and even zoos, are laying emphasis on natural surroundings, as much freedom as possible for the animals and shelter from heat and from the prying eyes of humans. Cars are not permitted, nor any other kind of vehicle and visitors are requested to be silent, to preserve the natural stillness of the forest.

But what have we here? A motorable road that runs right through the park and the deer enclosure. The ground is hard and rocky with no undergrowth or grass—hot in the summer, extemely cold in the winter. There is no built up shelter for the deer and not enough food. Of the seven deer that were originally there, only two remain. Transistors and loud-speakers are common because it is also a picnic spot and instead of cultivating the natural beauty of forest and lake and hills, the trees have been ringed and painted in red and white; stupid and vulgar boards read Honeymoon Lane and Lovers' Walk, and also for some weird reason there is a sign-board saying SPEAKESAY! I presume that the authorities are not aware that Speakeasy is a term which grew up during the American prohibition years and means an illicit liquor snop or den!

I

There are also huge boards with poems and mottoes enscribed on them, which half the people don't understand because they are written in English, and the other half who do understand, find irritating and irrelevant.

As an added attraction the forest authorities have caged numbers of small wild birds and jammed them together into a tiny, barred prison. In other small cages are green parrots with their wings chopped off, beating themselves wildly against the wiring that encloses them—one miserable peahen, and a few sick-looking gumea fowl.

At the interstate bus stop between Dehra Dun and Delhi, there is also a deer park in which the deer dwindle steadily. There are budgerigars and hamsters, again in small cages, piled up, one on top of the other, for curious children to prod and poke and stare at.

It is very curious indeed that while the capture and sale of wild birds has been totally banned, the forest department itself should be guilty of such cruelty. Perhaps the authorities would do well to learn this poem by heart instead of the feeble ones they have put up:

Oh life—that sweet and precious thing To man and beast and bird on wing, To every lowly living thing Its greatest treasure.

Let me not take it cruelly

Let me not take it cruelly Nor cut it short in wantonness, Nor cage it up in thoughtlessness, For my own pleasure.

### BEAUTY AND THE BEAST

### A FABLE REGIMAT

THERE was once a young advocate who was very keen to succeed at the Bar. He was a very handsome young man with charming manners. It was not surprising that he had a large circle of lady friends. He passed his law finals at the fourth attempt and started to practise at the Bar.

He received his first brief from a favourite uncle who was a senior solicitor. He was instructed to appear on behalf of a petitioner who sought redress from the Court against a harsh order passed against him

The young advocate vas thrilled to have this early opportunity to win his spurs. Unfortunitely he could not concentrate on the brief that evening as he had a dinner engagement with a pretty young lady. He decided to rise early rext morning and prepare himself.

After spending a very pleasant evening dining and dancing, the young advocate got home at a very late hour. Next morning, he had a "hang-over". He strugged hard with his brief but was not quite prepared when he went into Court.

The case came up for learing before a lady judge. The young advocate was horrified to find that his opponent was a senior advocate who had a high reputation at the Bar. He was exceedingly ugly. He had a long irregularly shaped note and a pitted face. He also had a very sharp tengue. He was known at the Bar as the old fox.

The young advocate got up to argue and began to fumble hopelessly. Sneering remarks passed by his opponent in an audible voice increased his discomfiture. The lidy judge disapproved of the conduct of the old fox towards a raw young junior which was not in the best traditions of the Bar. She felt sorry for the handsome young man who might lose a good case through inept handling. Her maternal instincts were aroused. She pointed out to the young advocate what was the strongest point in his favour and guided him in his arguments. The young advocate's confidence was restored. With the guidance given by the learned judge he put up a reasonable performance. He thanked her ladyship most graciously for her assistance.

The old fox did his utmost to turn the judge in his favour. He argued skilfully but to no avail. The lady Judge passed an order in favour of the young advocate and awarded him costs of the petition.

The young advocate's solicitor who was not present at the hearing was so pleased to hear the result that he raised the young advocate's fees and promised to send him more work.

The young advocate realised that he had a narrow escape. He resolved that he would make no appointments in future with his lady friends except, of course, during the week-ends.

Moral—The law is a jealous mistress.

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# OPINION

Vol. XIX

23th May 1978

No. 4

### REDUCTION OF INEQUALITY

#### TAYA ZINKIN

I NEQUALITY in material things has been greatly eroded in India as it has in Britain, since the second world war. The levelling up of lower incomes has been accompanied by a levelling down of higher ones by taxation, inflation and deliberate limitation. In Britain this has created profound resentment. But in India, where the process has been much more drastic, the mood is quite different. The victims of equalisation are resigned; some seem positively eager to tighten their own belts even further.

At the top, princes have lost their titles, gun salutes, privy purses and tax exemptions. They are laying off retainers, turning their palaces into hotels, making travel agents, camel dealers and engineers of their children. The feudal landlords who used to measure their estates by the square mile are also a thing of the past. Limitations on land holding, which usually vary from 10 to 15 acres according to the quality of land, have been enforced sufficiently to make even a pooled family holding of over 100 acres very rare.

Fortunes are still minted in business, usually by those who can combine imagination and risk-taking with successful tax-avoidance. But even India's nouveaux riches live far less ostentatiously than they used to. Traditional three-day weddings for thousands of guests have been replaced by, admittedly costly, receptions in a luxury hotel or a club. For cars, the most affluent have at best a second-hand Mercedes acquired through the State Trading Corporation which, alone in the land, can buy imported cars from departing foreigners. Most of those who can afford a car have the choice between a prewar Morris made in India and a small Indian copy of a fiat.

The extent to which the gap between rich and poor is being closed requires the perspective of memory. Before the war even a bicycle was a status symbol in small towns. Those were the days when a young bachelor in the civil service earned 120 times as much as an agricultural labourer, and 20 times as much as a school teacher, and employed seven or eight servants to look after himself, his house and his car. A Secretary to the Government of India earned five or six times as much again.

Today the same Secretary earns perhaps 10 times as much as an agricultural labourer in a prosperous Punjab district. The cost of living has gone up 16 times since 1939; the salary of the Secretary has been cut by a fifth and the tax on it is heavier than in 1939. By contrast, the agricul-

tural labourer's daily wage, even in a backward State like Orissa, is at least 20 times the prewar level. Equalisation has taken such a hold across the entire spectrum that a fitter in a large factory earns as much as a senior police officer. A senior clerk in a big multinational may earn as much as the chief administrator of a district.

In the days of the Raj, business was profitable but rarely respectable. "Box Wallahs", as they were called, were not on social terms with the armed services and even white businessmen could find themselves excluded from the better clubs. Today businessmen of all colours are accepted everywhere and there are many more of them but it is much harder to get rich, especially for professional managers. The pay of a director has to be approved by the government which is pressing for a lowering of the ceiling from £6,000 to £4,000 a year. Civil servants' salaries run from £300 a year to £3,000 for a few at the very top.

Why does the dispossessed Indian middle class react differently from its British counterpart? First, because the quality of life for the professional classes has improved. The old India offered luxury but seldom comfort. The new India offers few luxuries—though there are still enough servants to eliminate household drudgery—plus the comforts of modernity electricity, running water, flush toilets, television, occasionally airconditioning. Gross national product is going up, at least enough to keep 1% ahead of the birthrate; there are plenty of jobs to be done and plenty of people qualified to do them. With 17m tons of food grain in reserve and plenty of foreign exchange, India is moving ahead. That, they feel, is reward for sacrifice.

### LIFE ON THE UNDERSIDE, OR THE ADVENTURES OF A SOCIALIST HOUSEWIFE

GAURI DESHPANDE

suppose I have always lived life on its aboveside. I mean, what do I lack? Not money (if I do not desire mangoes above twice a season), not clothes (certainly not, since, being an inverted snog I always dress in faded jean and T shirts), not education (I have rather a useless surplus of it) and not a shelter above my head (four hundred and fifty square feet of home on the wrong side of the tracks). So here I was happily going along complaining in verse of broken hearts and cribbing daily of the increased prices of such non-essentials an cheese and beef, when my eyes were opened to my mean selfishness by neighbours and friends. They all were various kinds of "ists"-such as Communists, Marxists, Socialists, and the like. They brought to my notice the starving millions of India. They told me it was utterly wrong in me even to think of cheese and beef. They showed me the thousands of children who had been deprived of their childhoods and made me quite ashamed of my hale and hearty two. They pointed out to me the zopadpattis of Dharavi.

The net result of all this re-education was to really make me sit up and take notice. I really became aware of the fact that I, who have

always lived the privileged life, have done nothing to share my worldly goods, my time and my thoughts with those who live on the underside of life: Being quite naive, I began to look around for some such unfortunate I could help. The first to come to my notice was the woman who had agreed to wash and clean mop for me. I asked myself, "How much is it worth to me to be spared these monotonous and low-down tasks?" I was ashamed to see that I did not pay her even 5% of my monthly earnings. immediately increased her salary to Rs. 50, which was exactly of my monthly average income. I felt a glow of happiness. I was very proud when I next attended the Marxist discussion group. Rather modestly I announced to its members my first and faltering step towards the elimination of inequality. Expecting applause, even if on a scale modest enough to suit my achievement I was shocked to hear gasps of incredulity and exclamations of annoyance. I was bewildered. My sponsor explained kindly, "You must be mad! In this area, for such little work, you give 50 Rupees! What if all our "basis" start demanding the same salaries? Where are we to find the money? It's all right for you—you both earn, but have some consideration for others!" Cresfallen, I retreated. I could not now decrease the salary of my bai. All I could do, was to explain to her that I could not remain bound to the house every day awaiting her arrival and so had decided to do the housework myself. She left reluctantly, suspecting that there was more here than met the eye (as indeed was the case). This move on my part too met with the disapproval of the "ists". They surely believed in the dignity of labour but if every one began to do the housework themselves, who was to employ these uneducated, unskilled, poor men and women, whose only recours was to work as house-servants? Didn't I know how serious the unemployment situation in this country was? How could I be so inconsiderate? Defeated on this front too, I turned my attention a little further afield.

A woman and her eight children lived under a stairway in the colony. God knows how she earned her living. I suspected prostitution. Dirty, underfed, halfnaked, they were an eye-sore in our lovely colony. They quite spoilt your nice walk in the pretty garden. You felt guitty if your baby was well-dressed. You couldn't buy fish at 10 Rs. a pair right under their hungry eyes. They resisted every effort at evacuation. I suggested to my "ist" friends that we do something about them. We each could feed one child once a day. No one could object to that, surely. I was wrong. "Well, my children won't have that ahem—eating with them. I will give one of them some bread-and-pickle to eat outside if you like." "And what are we to give them to eat?

Those kind of people don't like that her only eat chillies."

Those kind of people don't library kind, where now hey only eat chillies." (I almost intervened, saying, what else is there for them, the poor devils? but held my tengue). "I don't mind, but everyone won't agree to it, and then why should I be the one to be saddled with this forever?" "And besides, once word goes round, we'll have queues of leggars outside the colony." "And, anyway, it's not good to get them used to handouts like this. They must learn to be useful members of society." Quickly, I pounc-

ed on this. "Then why not employ the eldest girl to mop up the stairways in every building? She is old enough to do it." "But then she will come into the house and ask for buckets of water." "Well, give it to her!" "Well, you see, well, my mother-in-law...she is a bit old fashioned, and well, she won't allow it." "Why?" "Well, they are, I mean, they are after all, untouchables!" I must have looked really aghast, because the speaker at least had the grace to look shamefaced. But no one else seconded this motion. So I tried again. "The children are mostly naked. Why not give old clothes to them at least?" "Well, I don't mind, but all my children are much older you see." "And mine are boys, and they are all girls, except for the infant; and I don't have any infant clothes." "Well, I normally give all our old clothes to the rag-and-bone man and get a nice pickle-jar or something in return, but I dont mind giving a frock to the eldest girl." Giving that up, I took up what to me "Couldn't we all chip in and buy her some matemattered most. rial to build a hut behind the groundlevel water .tanks? terrible to have to jump and stumble over those sleeping children every time one goes out. And they do everything right out in the open. It's not nice." I could hear the prim middle-class whine creep into my voice but couldn't stop it. I knew that here at any rate they would all be on my side, for no one could deny that that family was primarily an eyesore. There was silence. It had an ominous quality. The secretary "Listen. You really are mixed up. Those people ENCROACHING on our land. Do you understand? They must first GO. Maybe we'll pay them something to get out, but build them a hut HERE? Are you out of your mind?" Another member said darkly, "And they had better clear out while the going is good, or else..." Now, quite defeated and dismayed, I stared from face to face, meeting perhaps pity, but mostly indignant and haughty surprise. No sympathy.

Soon after that I moved to a different area. On a recent visit to the old flat I found no trace of the squatters, and, upon inquiring, was told gleefully that some tough looking policemen were involved in the matter and that was that. In my new home I have also become an "ist"—an Individualist. I help whoever I feel like helping, in whichever way I feel I can. I do not know if it benefits the starving millions of India but it helps one small child, or one starving woman, or one stray dog or one college-going poor boy. And I feel a little happier.

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### PUNISHING MRS. GANDHI

A. G. NOORANI

CAN one guilty of so sordid a betrayal of the public trust, as Mrs. Indira Gandhi has been found to be by the Shah Commission, be allowed to go scot free? A prosecutor in the impeachment of the Earl of Stafford said "If it be treason to kill the Governor then sure 'tis treason to kill the Government." Strafford was found guilty of high treason in that he "endeavoured to subvert the fundamental laws" of the land "to introduce an arbitrary power."

The bar against ex post facto penal legislation in Article 20(3) of the Constitution might save her from prosecution and conviction if the wrong of subversion of the Constitution is now made a criminal offence. The bar cannot, however, affect the kind of amendments to the law which Mr. Ram Jethmalani has suggested, namely, making refusal to testify before a Commission of Inquiry a punishable offence triable by the Commission itself, by amending the Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952, and disqualifying such a person from standing for election to the legislature, by suitable amendment to the Representation of the People Act, 1951. S. 123 of the Act sets out the corrupt practices which entail disqualification and Chapter III the electoral offences which are punishable by criminal courts. For example, promotion of "feelings of enmity or hatred better different, classes of citizens of India on grounds of religion, race, community or language" is both a corrupt practice and an electoral time.

But is it a wrong graver than the ones of which Mrs. Gandhi has been found guilty? Mr. Jethmalani's suggestion concerns the refusal to testify. It is interesting to recall in this context that shortly after the Ayyangar Commission's Report on the misdeeds of Bakshi Ghulam Mohammed, the Representation of the People Act was amended by the State of Jammu and Kashmir to debar from election to the State legislature one who had been indicted by a Commission of Inquiry. But since no such amendment was made by Parliament, the Bakshi was free to stand for election to Parliament in 1971 though not to the State Assembly.

The relevant provision of the Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People Act is as follows: "Where a person has been found (a) by any civil or criminal court or (b) by any tribunal, board or Commission set up under any statute, to have illegally or by corrupt means or by otherwise abusing or misusing:

(1) The position held by him as a member of either House of the

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State legislature or of Parliament, or (2) the office held by him by virtue of being such member;

Obtained for himself or for any of his relatives any valuable thing or pecuniary advantages, he shall be disqualified for a period of 10 years from the date of commencement of the Jammu and Kashmir Representation of the People (Second Amendment) Act, 1967, or from the date on which such finding becomes public, whichever is later;

Provided that such person had the opportunity of being heard in the proceedings held by such court, tribunal, board or Commission;

Provided further that such tribunal, board or Commission was presided over by a person who is or has been a Judge of the Supreme Court of India."

Perhaps the most feasible course is to implement the recommendations the Commission of Inquiry consisting of Mr. J. R. Mudholkar, a former Judge of the Supreme Court, in its Report on the charges against 14 former Ministers of the United Front Ministry in Bihar. The Report, which was submitted on November 19, 1969, contains a wealth of useful material on matters constitutional and administrative.

The Mudholkar Commission's recommendation regarding amendments to the electoral law are complementary to, and can be implemented along with, the suggestions made by Mr. Jethmalani. The Commission recommended: "The Representation of People Act may be suitably amended by disqualifying from candidature at any election for a certain period of time every person who had held the office of a Minister at every level— (a) who by his deliberate act or commission caused loss to the State Exchequer, or (b) who generally commits breaches of procedural rules to the detriment of the State of of any individual, or (c) who has been found guilty by a court of law or a Commission of Inquiry of indulging in corruption or self-aggrandisement in any other manner or who improperly confers benefits, pecuniary or otherwise, on persons in whom he is interested, or (d) who deliberately violates his oath of office or oath of secrecy, or (e) who brings about the defeat of a Government of which he is a member and secures office for himself in the succeeding Government in consideration of the part played by him in throwing out the Government in which he was a Minister." Such an amendment will be the most effective way of dealing with one who has deliberately violated her oath of office. A serious lacuna in the law will have been filled.

For, as pointed out by Sir Harold Derbyshire, Chief Justice of the Calcutta High Court, in 1943 in a case concerning the Chief Minister of Bengal, Mr. A. K. Fazlul Huq, "a person who takes an oath or makes an affirmation to tell the truth in a judicial proceeding and breaks it is guilty or perjury and may be punished at law by the courts. A person, however, who on taking up an office is required by law to take an oath of office that he will faithfully perform the duties of that office, takes what is called a promissory oath. The breach of promissory oath, in the absence of a special provision of law to that effect is not punishable at law. As far as I am aware, there is no punishment in law for the breaking of the promissory oath of office as Chief Minister.

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"But the clear violation of it brands a man as unfit for public office. If solemn promissory oaths by persons who take high office in the State are to be disregarded as mere formalities, there is no possibility of good Government. Mr. Huq is left to the contemplation and judgment of his fellowmen."

In these remarks Sir Harold touched the heart of the problem of probity in public life. What matters no less and perhaps more then penal consequences in the case of a public figure is "the contemplation and judgment of his followmen." And it does not cheer one to think that in India this judgment is not as informed by the values of democracy and public rectitude as it should be. If it were, Mrs. Gandhi would not be flourishing in the public life of the country at all.

Contrast this with the fate of Mr. Richard Nixon. He was driven out of American public life by the people's wrath aroused by the disclosures. Prof. Archibald Cox, the Special Prosecutor in the Watergate case, has in the Chichele Lectures at Oxford laid bare the agonies which gripped him even as he was pursuing Mr. Nixon. "What if the President defied the Supreme Court's order?" he kept on asking himself. "How far was a man justified in provoking this kind of constitutional crisis with the outcome so uncertain?"

The results are most instructive to us in our present predicament. "My fears proved fantasies. President Nixon's announcement evoked a public reaction which his chief aide later described as a 'fire storm'. Within seventy-two hours the President changed his mind and promised to comply with the decrees. A bit later, a new Special Prosecutor was appointed and the independence of the Watergate Special Prosecution Force was restored. The people proved their determination—and their moral and political power—to require the highest officials to meet their obligations under law." It is this spirit of resentment of the intensity of a "fire storm" which is lacking in our people.

[Which does not mean that nothing can be done here. One of the principal reasons for the current lack of enthusiam among the people for the top leadership of the Janata Government and party has been its lukewarmness in dealing with Mrs. Gandhi, its almost awed attitude in relation to her. The people would have welcomed short, sharp measures settling this problem at least for the next ten years. Instead they have been involved in a mass of legalistic jargon, unlikely, as they see it, to terminate in any adequate punishment for the greatest malefactor in the land since Independence. From an urgent desire to see scores settled with Mrs. Gandhi the tyrant, they have been reduced to a state of utter despair in this regard, and utter contempt for a Government so incapable, so completely helpless, either because of lack of will or lack of capacity, to fulfil the primary task for which it was elected. A 'fire storm' in such circumstances would be a most unlikely phenomenon. After all ordinarily in a democracy in most matters the Government leads and the people cooperate. Here not only has the Government not led but it has back-slided.

In spite of all this, however, there can be no doubt that as a whole the people would rejoice if they saw even at this late stage, signs of



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strength and determination in dealing with Mrs. Gandhi and her son. A peace to all your prating, fathers of empty talk, they would say, action, please, action now! If therefore the government wishes to regain some at least of the respect it has lost, there are just two things for it to do: to pursue with vigour and speed to a satisfactory conclusion the criminal cases against the tyrant which have emerged from the Shah Commission Report, and to carry through with the utmost expedition the kind of legislation our writer recommends, so that the tyrant may be debarred from standing for election or voting for a sufficiently long period. This is no time for hemming and hawing, for putting off for consideration, in brief for the drift, delay and drift that has hitherto characterised the handling of this very significant matter, the implications or which go far beyond the immediate issue. In the last resort the point is, shall justice prevail over all or shall it tremble and shrink and slink away, like a beaten dog with its tail between its legs, when confronted by an evil personage with political power?

Clear away all the sophistries and nice qualifications from the spate of writings recently by Mrs. Gandhi's supporters of no action against her, and what remains? Only this. To justice they say, hush, hush, go away, and almost seem to burst into song with "Bow, bow, to the Empressthat-was, the Empress-that-will-be, of India." Their appeal is to our timidity, they want to make our blood creep. Beware, beware, they cry with flashing eyes and gesturing arms, there will be serious breaches of the peace, great damage to property etc, etc. Good sirs, there may be, and if there is, you too will have borne your part in inciting it, but therefore shall justice be banished from the face of India, shall the powerful wrong-doer be secure after oppression and tyranny, shall we all turn cowards? And if there are serious riots, well have we not faced such riots before and reduced them to nothing? Not that it is certain there will be. Indication that the Government really means business, has left hesitation behind, and is firm and determined in its course, may in itself prove a disincentive to mischief-makers, however interested or highly remunerated. And if not, surely the State still has ample power to deal with them adequately, aye, even with recalcitrant wrong-doing Governments of local areas? In truth, we have nothing to fear but fear, and is that an emotion that should hinder us in the pursuit of justice and in the safeguarding of our land from tyranny-to-come?—Ed. |

### **TOWARDS 2001**

#### LORD HOME

T HE weather forecaster, when he peers into the future, takes the pattern of behaviour from the past—adds to it any current trends which could assume permanence, and then hopes to achieve a credible reputation as a prophet. So he proceeds unless and until the arrival of some convulsive phenomenon makes a nonsense of his premises and



falsifies all prediction. I will come to the convulsion in due course, but first I must find a base from which to start to select the features of our world which are likely to be recognisable a quarter or half a century ahead.

I have no option but to take the impact of European civilisation on the world which we know. It was built from many ingredients: The Christian code of ethical conduct; the evolution of democratically elected Parliaments; the supremacy of the law in a self-disciplined society; the dynamism of capitalism; the wealth and the power to sustain physical security. The civilisation spread to North America, to Australia and to New Zealand, while through the practice of colonialism its influence was felt far and wide in what is now known as The Third World. Is there any reason why, if these values are proved, they should not (with adaptation) run on far into the future?

Of one thing there is no doubt. The possible 'convulsion' which is the forecasters' dread, looms on the horizon. It stems from the public policy of the Communist Soviet Union which is that Communism must win the ultimate victory over every other way of life. Communism, in other words, is for export, nor is it bound by the convention of the European democracies of non-interference in other countries' affairs. Communism has shown the dynamism of a crusading faith. It can in certain circumstances use force in support of its doctrine. The Russian ethic as it applies was lately stated by the Secretary-General of the Communist party of the U.S.S.R. as follows: "We do not desire to use force, but we cannot allow the lack of it to stand in the way of our political aims." It is possible that one of the democracies of Western Europe could become a 'political aim'.

The procedure is the use of highly developed techniques of subversion to soften up the target for take-over. Could this emphasis on force bring about the 'convulsion' which will make all prophecy futile? You will recall Dr. Solzhenitsyn's first finding when he arrived in Western Europe. It was that Russian re-armament had achieved such momentum that war in Europe was now inevitable. While he was saying that the Chinese were telling me the same thing in Peking. That warning must be taken seriously.

A few years ago decisive nuclear power lay with the West. Today there is parity in tactical nuclear weapons, in intermediate nuclear weapons and in intercontinental missiles. The Soviet military leaders calculating that in such circumstances the deterrent becomes less credible, are vastly increasing their conventional arms—tanks and guns and submarns. War is not inevitable. But the life of the democracies may well hang on whether they have the will to strengthen N.A.T.O. with conventional arms. And to do so to a point where all temptation is removed from the Soviet High Command to launch a surprise attack and face the West with a 'fait accomplit'. I forecast that the alliance—at what is the eleventh hour—will so re-inforce itself; while the Russians—for nuclear retaliation cannot be excluded—will recognise that the inter-continental missile has drastically changed the ratio between war and survival.

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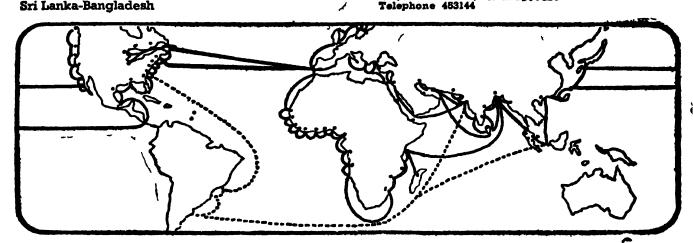
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I will not dwell at any length on the future of capitalism. Its achievements stemmed from the individual with the idea who was ready to back it with his fortune. In the industrialised Northern hemisphere it has certainly delivered the goods in terms of consumer welfare and living standards. Neither State Enterprise nor any other system can hold a candle to its achievements. In future there will of course be modifications. Innovation and invention will stem from groups working in the field of applied science while so expensive is the world of machines that private and public finance will need to go increasingly into partnership. But I forecast with some confidence that the Communist and Socialist communities will need to absorb the techniques of capitalism rather than the other way round. The sign-posts already point that way.

The great question mark hangs over the future of democracy. Are our traditional values valid? I can make a strong case for them. If we were to start from scratch and re-write a code of social conduct for British society would it differ essentially from the Ten Commandments? In other words—if we did not kill, we did not steal, we did not covet, we did not bear false witness, would not the country be a very much better and happier world in which to live?

And Parliamentary democracy. Is not one man one vote, with all its imperfections, the nearest thing to government of the people, by the people and for the people? And self-discipline within the law. Is it not necessary to have a check on over-weaning power; and is not freedom of choice always preferable to orders? I believe that present and future generations will rally to such standards. But in these busy days the best is not automatically recognised and it is not self-preserving. If we wish to preserve these values and the way of life which goes with them, then there must be public witness to them. Our experience is that Edmund Burke was right. "All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing." I forecast that, because of their basic virtues, democracy and freedom under the law will survive to 2,000 A.D. and beyond. But we must rally to the standard. 'I am the individual I am.' Until now we have always remembered that in everything which as a nation we have done. Twice in my lifetime we have fought for the preservation of such values. Are they valid for the new generation of today?

There is a school of philosophers who have studied the accounts of previous civilisations. They have discovered a common pattern of rise—plateau—and decline. The rise is stimulated by technological innovation and when that falters the decline sets in. They have placed the Western democracies on their graph, and Western Europe is on the slope down and the United States is over the top. I do not necessarily accept the premise. It is difficult to hold that either in Western Europe or the United States technological innovation is exhausted. Concorde alone would seem to deny it, and one of the recurring features of capitalism is that man is always doing something for the first time.

But the finding which did give me to pause were the symptoms of decline in civilisations which have gone before. A weakening of religion

—the substitution of pleasure for traditional moral and ethical values—a disregard for civic values—an increase in permissiveness—a lack of political grip. These are too near the knuckle by half! And one must admit that they coincide with the second statement of Dr. Solzhenitsyn that he found the morale of the free democracies so low that Communism might win the battle for men's minds and souls without a fight. It is possible that we might reach an attitude of mind in which, because there is no value on which we would ultimately stand, we feel justified in letting go little by little day by day.

(A speech in Landon)

### SHAH COMMISSION

#### SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

(Continued from last issue)

Mr. E. M. S. Namboodripad has disclosed that the Russian government does not want a non-aligned India and wants the return of Mrs. Gandhi who had turned the country into a Soviet Satellite—and simultaneously a Gulg Archipelago. Practically, all the Monopoly Houses in India—with just two or three possible exceptions—also want her back.

George Fernandez in his report to the National Executive of the Party says: "The erstwhile dictator has been making wild charges against the Government and telling lies in the manner of the congenital liar that she is. On the Shah Commission, on police firings, on the state of the economy, on foreign affairs, on foreign capital, and Harijans, Muslims, and the minorities—on every issue she has been not only lying but seeing to, it that her lies get printed. There has been hardly any attempt on the part of the Government to counter her Goebbelsian propaganda. We tend to forget that she has perfected the art of Goebbels and that she ruled through propaganda and gimmicks".

The lesson of the Shah Commission is that time is on the side of the tyrant. Therefore, swift political action and not a legal proceeding is necessary. Unless swift action is taken, her supporters will have recourse to violence.

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## OPINION

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### **GARDENS**

#### R. E. HAWKINS

AEEQ FUTEHALLY has written a book entitled Gardens, recently published by the National Book Trust at the price of Rs. 22. It is mainly about public gardens and landscaping, and the way we should look at them. It contains no lists of plants or detailed instructions for the individual with a few plants on his balcony or a small patch of land at his disposal.

The blurb tells me that the author's 'life-long interest in garden design found fulfilment when she was in charge of landscaping and planning the two gardens of Powai and Vihar near Bombay', so on 30 May I went to these two gardens and came to the conclusion that someone had blundered. The Powai garden, with its shady paths and winding watercourses, is the sort of garden that Laeeq Futehally praises, while the Vihar garden illustrates what should be avoided—flowering shrubs symmetrically lining a straight, unshaded promenade, water-pipes painted yellow and puce, and bright and sickly green, the sections painted in more and more ugly colours than Shelley's pestilence-stricken multitudes of autumn leaves. The two gardens cannot come from the same designer. The view of Vihar lake is fine, and the difficulties of making a garden on a narrow bund are pernaps insuperable; but the author of Gardens cannot be held responsible for the polychrome pipes, even if children like the bright make-up of Humpty-Dumpty and Noah's Ark.

Trees, a peaceful atmosphere, and a view of the sky: these are what a garden needs, and the Powai garden does have a restful, shady feel, in spite of the fact that on 30 May the channels and areas intended for wearer were dry or merely muddy. One saw too notices asking for litter we put in bins which were no longer there. Maintenance was poor, and as Mrs. Futehally insists, good maintenance of public gardens is of the first importance. Clean and shady picnic spots are better than rose-gardens and flower-beds.

Powai Park already had the trees which are its chief attraction, and Vihar had its lake, but on the stony, almost treeless hill overhanging the Worli Dairy a new Municipal garden was constructed and opened as recently as 1975. This is the Lal Bahadur Shastri Udyan, and the site presented the sort of challenges with which Gardens is concerned. The designer started with the great advantage that his site lay beneath a reservoir, and that he could therefore rely on keeping his lawns green.

Mrs. Futehally would give high marks for the preponderance of space given to grass and for the way in which the lawns follow the slopes of the hillside instead of being fiattened and patterned geometrically. There is a rolling shoulder at the north end which looks most inviting, though it lacks trees at present.

More use of the water is evidently being planned, for a pool has recently been dug near the entrance, in a position where, it seems, very few people will be able to sit around it or admire the lotuses which will float on its surface. And Mrs Futehally would certainly not approve of the strip of hillside labelled WELCOME which has been faced, with concrete down which water is to drip, interrupted by bricks painted in many colours—a very inferior version of the decorated marble chutes of Moguly gardens.

Gardens is a stimulating and enjoyable book, illustrated with some good photographs. It would have been better to omit the line drawings.

Postscript: The Indian Laburnum, or amaltas, is to me the most beautiful of all Indian flowering trees, to the sight of whose flowers I look forward all the year. On 30 May I saw none in the Powai or Vihar parks, one wild tree near the pipeline where it passes Morarji Nagar, and one in the garden of Larsen & Toubro's Welfare Centre. In Laburnum Road, one of the Bombay Improvement Trust's creations of 1911, there is not a single laburnum blooming. And the hardest blow of all is that the clusters of gulmohers and laburnum which used to illuminate the corner of the Reserve Bank building facing Nariman Circle, has been replaced by stone and metal. I like to think it was C. D. Deshmukh who had the imagination to plant the trees, which, in the few weeks they bloomed together were one of Bombay's glories.

### ABOUT GARDENS, AND AROUND

"A garden is a lovesome thing, God wot!
Rose plot,
Fringed pool
Fern'd grot—
The veriest school
Of peace; and yet the fool
Contends that God is not—
Not God! in gardens! when the eve is cool?
Nay, but I have a sign,
"Tis very sure God walks in mine."

"God Almighty first planted a garden. And indeed it is the purest of human pleasures. It is the greatest refreshment to the spirits of man; without which buildings and palaces are but gross handyworks; and a man shall ever see that when ages grow to civility and elegency, men come to build stately sooner than to garden finely; as if gardening were the greater perfection."

"So I, and Eucritus and the fair Amynticus, turned aside into the house of Phrasidamus, and lay down with delight in beds of sweet tamarisk and fresh cuttings from the vine. Many poplars and elm-trees were waving over our heads, and not far off the running of the sacred water from the cave of the nymphs warbled to us; in the shimmering branches the sunburnt grasshoppers were busy with their talk, and from afar the little owl cried softly, out of the tangled thorns of the blackberry; the larks were singing and the hedge-birds, and the turtle-dove moaned; the bees flew round and round the fountains, murmuring softly; the scent of late summer and of the fall of the year was everywhere; the pears fell from the trees at our feet, and apples in number rolled down at our sides, and the young plum-trees were bent to the earth with the weight of the fruit.'

"Dear mother earth, within your breast Take old Amyntichus to rest, Remembering the years, not few Spent in various toil for you. Many's the time in you he'd plant Olive-trees, that never want For foliage, and array you fine In livery of branching vine; With fields of corn he'd make you rich, And lead through many a channelled ditch The water brooks, letting your ground Abound with fruits, with herbs abound. Lay in return, a gentle, light Burden upon his temples white, And, for his grave's adornment, bring Flowers and verdure in the spring."

"The thief's feet bruised wet lavender
Into sweet sharp surprise;
The orchard, full of pears and joy,
Smiled like a gold sunrise;
But the blind house stared down on him
With strange white-lidded eyes.

He stood at the world's secret heart
In the haze-wrapt mystery;
And fat pears, mellow on the lip,
He supped like a honey-bee;
But the apples he crunched with sharp white teeth
Were pungent, like the sea.

And this was the oldest garden joy, Living and young and sweet. And the melting mists took radiance, And the silence a rhythmic beat, For the day came stealing stealthily, A thief, upon furtive feet."

"Gr-r-methere go, my heart's abhorrence! Water your damned flower-pots, do! If hate killed men, Brother Lawrence, God's blood, would not mine kill you! What? your myrtle-bush wants trimming? Oh, that rose has prior claims—Needs its leaden vase filled brimming? Hell dry you up with its flames!"

"I was angry with my friend:
I told my wrath, my wrath did end.
I was angry with my foe:
I told it not, my wrath did grow.

And I watered it in fears, Night and morning with my tears; And I sunned it with smiles, And with soft deceitful wiles.

And it grew both day and night, Till it bore an apple bright; And my foe beheld it shine, And he knew it was mine,

And into my garden stole When the night had vieled the pole; In the morning glad I see My foe outstretched beneath the tree."

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## OPINION

Vol. XIX

20th JUNE 1978

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It should be investigated as to who committed these inhuman acts and why?

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### THE RETURN OF TYRANNY?

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There is no easy or pat explanation of the ganging up of disparate and miscellaneous forces behind Indira. "Let us anatomise Regan" as Lear said. We know who Regan is, but let us rather anatomise her supporters and discover why there is no indignation against tyranny, no revulsion against personal corruption and misuse of authority. Of course, it is true that India has never evolved a strong liberal tradition. The Congress even in its heyday, was a caucus of power-hungry men, and its consistent worship of power has almost institutionalised tyranny. "Power worship blurs political judgment because it leads almost unavoidably to the belief that present trends will continue. Whoever is winning at the moment will always seem to be invincible" (Orwell). Just because, aided by tycoon billions and the KGB organisation Indira has won a few bye-elections, all her hucksters and lickspittles are speculating on the possibility of a second Indira-promulgated Emergency.

There are several factors which are accessories and auxiliaries of tyranny in India. The ever-increasing concentration of industrial and financial power, the erosion of which remains one of the Janata Party's unfulfilled pledges; the diminishing importance of the individual and the small capitalist; the growth of the new managerial class of scientists and bureaucrats; the organised trahison des clercs heavily subsidised by the billionaires, and the depraving of public taste and opinion by compelling the mass media to become the vulgarisers of India; the politicalisation of the police and the growth of police terrorism; personality cult promoted with public money—the cumulative effect of all this is to erode

faith in the value of civil liberties and Human Rights and to create a climate for one-person rule, seconded of course by flunkeys. Tolerance of atrocities and financial corruption, such as Morarji Desai has repeatedly shown, is bound to help the former tyrant and her discredited son. The most outrageous examples of this come from London and Washington. In London, Desai made the gratuitous statement that there was no hurry about trying Indira. His subsequent inquiry from America about the people's outburst against the deposed tyrant at Cuttack was still more despicable and was really an endorsement of tyranny. Desai chooses to be an accessory of tyranny, he has forfeited his right to remain in office. Mr. A G. Noorani in a very able and timely article in Opinion has regretted our lack of mass resentment of personality cults, personal corruption and tyranny. Some time ago, Opinion deplored the "drift and delay" about Indira Gandhi. With due respect to the learned editor, this writer submits that the operative word is not "delay" but "deal". There must be a secret deal between the former tyrant and her successor. Unless Indira has a secret leverage over Morarji, the present Prime Minister's unpatriotic, inane statements are difficult to explain.

The daily mendacities of Indira should not surprise any one. Organised lying is something integral to totalitarianism and tyranny. It would continue even if concentration camps and armies of informers who wanted at every street corner during the Emergency and secret police forces had ceased to be necessary.

The general drift of India since 1947 has been towards bligarchy which the political manipulators prefer to democracy. "India is the world's lagest democracy" is a statistical myth. A society which sets no store on egalitarian values and human dignity is essentially hierarchical,—a fact reflected in the educational structure and the mass media—and that is what Indira is counting on. Unfortunately the Janata government at the centre is led by a trimmer.

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# OPINION

Vol. XIX

27th JUNE 1978

No. 9

### THE RETURN OF TYRANNY?

(Continued)

#### SADHAN KUMAR GHOSH

The Russians, and the billionaires originating largely in one particular area of the country, are spending astronomical sums on the creation in India of a climate congenial to totalitarianism and tyranny and to undoing the results of the general election of March 1977. This is evident from the emergence of a large gutter Press (mostly profusely illustrated) and a gutter literature about the Emergency. One of the saddest things has been the spate of third-rate books written about it. None of the books was worthy of the great occasion. The book which was a best-seller consisted of newspaper reports strung together. I am not including in my indictment, Zarer Masani's book which was not entirely about the Emergency and David Selbourne's excellent An Eye to India. Yes, but the book only reminds us that Indian writers, whether writing in English or their own vernaculars, had an eye only on the main chance and made no attempt to show up Indira as the monster she was and is.

The Emergency was an illicit effort to legalise "liquidation", plunder and brigandage. It was also a highly successful attempt to deprive man of his most fundamental right—the right to know. The Emergency was a high time for the informers, bumsuckers and licksplittles and the quasi-religious con-men. It was a period of terror, torture and suspicion. Yet the Emergency produced no books—not even in the Indian languages, which one might mention with Silone, or Salvemini, or Victor Serge, not to name Solzhenitsyn. Yet it is indisputable that Emergency India was as nightmarish a place at Gulag Archipelago. The most total silence on this terror in the books on the Emergency published so far and the mass media today is a measure of our trahson des clercs. A bought mind is indeed a spoiled mind.

"But historical precedent shows that censorship and detention, fear and betrayal, unemployment and violence cannot between them squeeze out of existence—however near class power may come to it—the indissoluble opposition of the essential interests of the exploited and downtrodden" (David Selbourne). This has to be rehearsed along with the memory of Indira-Sanjay's personal and pecuniary advancement coinciding with India's political regression. Neither Indira nor any of her latest advisers, realises that slavery can no longer be a stable basis for a civilised society.

No punishment—other than the extreme one—can be adequate for

Indira and her caucus, but at the least very severe punishments and disqualifications must be inflicted. Mr. A. G. Noorani and Mr. Ram Jethmalani have pointed out that certain enactments and amendments will be necessary. The Janata promise of effective action within two weeks (this is being written on June 13) is in the light of the past, scarcely likely to be fulfilled. All the same, Morarji must realise that he will not retain his office if he lends clandestine support to the former tyrant, compounds with her felony and treason, and continues to condone her clamant crookeries.

### **COMMENT**

So intimate would seem to be getting the connection between the top leadership of the Janata Party and Government and Mrs. Indira Gandhi that they even endeavour to prove true her forecast. at the beginning she said she did not give the Janata Government or party more than a year or a year and a half; they were bound to break up. For quite a time it seemed she would be wrong; the party was becoming more united, the government was functioning on the basis of concensus. And then as the time limit grew nearer, the leadership of both government and party decided to oblige her, and so out of Raj Narain's usual booorishness, and Charan Singh's opinionted egoism, was manufactured the excuse of Presidential authority and discipline. (A man who needs disciplinary measures to get his authority accepted in a political party ought never to be its President at all.) However the top leadership came near to fulfilling Indira's prophecy, nor is it certain yet that the crisis will pass over, though this Sunday morning the papers report favourable signs. What is truly shocking is the lack of public spirit among the men right at the top, Morarji, Charan Singh, Chandra Sekhar! Have these petty characters in big positions not the imagination to see how they are wrecking the country in their quest for illusory successes in their own small aims? Is I, I, the only letter in the alphabet chart their eyes fix on? And is obliging Indira their strongest and most secret interest? Let them remember that Indira was a most notable tyrant—for the period of her unbridled power during the emergency, that from her there spread the infection of evil-doing throughout the country, that there is not the least sign to indicate that in the fifteen months since the Emergency ended ner nature and disposition have changed in the least. Repentence she scorns; her past she justifies. Do you with your foolish, selfish quarrels wish her to repeat it?

Since we cannot but presume that the Janata Party in Parliament consists on the whole of fairly reasonable men, its course in the present circumstances would seem to be clear. It must redress the wrong balance of the leadership. To it it must say the break-up of the Government and the Party, apart from causing very great harm to the nation, would also cause very great damage to us, and so even on that very solid prac-

tical ground just cannot be borne. If you Morarji, Charan Singh, Chandrashekhar feel you cannot continue with others, we insist that all three of you should go, and we shall take steps to fill your places simultaneously. We are not prepared to go along apportioning praise or blame among you. Work together with goodwill for the country's sake, your sake and our sake or, in the name of God, all go and save our eyes the sight of your disgraceful wrangles! And if you go, we will not miss the pro-Indiraites of the Cabinet and Party Offices that will wish to accompany you. Better fewer, but better!

The third anniversary of the proclamation of the Emergency having been during the seven-day ending with this issue, here are given some authoritative observations on the excesses committed in Delhi (right under Mrs Gandhi's own supervision):

"With the Press gagged and a resultant black out of authentic information, arbitrary arrests and detentions went on apace. Effective dissent was smothered, followed by a general erosion of democratic values. Highhanded and arbitrary actions were carried out with impunity. nation was initially in a state of shock, and then of stupor, unable to realise the directions and the full implications of the actions of the Government and its functionaries. Tyrants sprouted at all levels overnight—tyrants whose claim to authority was largely based on their proximity to the seats of power. The attitude of the general run of the public functionaries was largely characterised by a paralysis of the will to do the right and proper things. The ethical considerations inherent in public behaviour became generally dim and in many cases beyond the mental grasp of many of the public functionaries. Desire for self-preservation as admitted by a number of public servants at various levels became the sole motivation for their official actions and behaviour. Anxiety to survive at any cost formed the key-note of approach to the problems that came before many of them. The fear generated by the mere threat and without even the actual use of the weapon of detention under MISA became so pervasive that the general run of the public servants acted as willing tools of tyranny. That the primary and not infrequently the sole motivation in the case of a number of public servants who acted unlawfully to the prejudice of the rights of citizens, was the desire for self-protection—desire for survival, may be regarded as some extenuation of their conduct. Yet, if the nation is to preserve the fundamental values of a democratic society, every person whether a public functionary or private citizen must display a degree of vigilance and willingness to sacrifice. Without the awareness of what is right and a desire to act according to what is right there may be no realisation of what is wrong. During the emergency, for many a public functionary the dividing line between right and wrong, moral and immoral, ceased to exist.

The circumstances in which the emergency was declared and the case with which it was accomplished should be a warning to the citizens of the country. The Cabinet and the important functionaries of the Government were not only not consulted but were deliberately kept in the dark

by Smt. Indira Gandhi when she decided to advise the President to impose an "internal emergency" upon the already existing emergency in the country.

Smt Indira Gandhi did not consult the Cabinet even though she had plenty of time to do so. The plea that she had taken when writing to the President that she would have liked to take the matter up with the Cabinet but unfortunately it had been not possible that night, does not appear to be convincing. If a Cabinet meeting could be convened at the minutes' notice as it was actually done on the morning of June 26, there was no reason why a Cabinet meeting could not have been held at any time between her first visit to the President at 5 p.m. on June 25 and the actual signing of proclamation at about 11—11.30 p.m. on the same night. At any rate, the Commission has enough evidence to show that Smt Indira Gandhi planned the imposition of the emergency at least as early as June 22. She had also shared that thought with some of her political confidants as early as the morning of June 25.

There is no evidence of circumstances which would warrant the declaration of an emergency, much less the imposition of an additional emergency. The types of measures such as detentions under MISA and severing electricity connections to the Press, that closely followed in the wake of the declaration of emergency on the night of June 25. 1975, even before the formulation of the rules from which alone authority for these acts would be derived, were motivated by considerations of exigency only. There is no evidenc of any breakdown of law and order in any part of the country-nor of any apprehension in that behalf; the economic condition was well under control and had in no way deteriorated. There is not even a report of an apprehension of any serious breakdown of the law and order situation or deterioration of the economic condition from any public functionary. There was no threat to the wellbeing of the nation from sources external or internal. clusion appears in the absence of any evidence given by Smt. Indira Gandhi or any one else, that the one and the only motivating force for tendering the extraordinary advice to the President to declare an "internal emergency" was the intense political activity generated in the ruling party and the opposition, by the decision of the Allahabad High Court declaring the election of the Prime Minister of the day invalid on the ground of corrupt election practices.

(To be continu

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# OPINION

Vol. XIX

4th JULY 1978

No. 10

My dear Prime Minister, if you can't deal swiftly and effectively with Mrs. Gandhi, get out!

# CONFUCIUS

I'M AFRAID that's what most of us up here have come to feel. Opinion is divided on why you behave as you do with regard to Mrs. G. Some of us feel it to be the natural softening of will that comes with old age. Others say that old age has nothing to do with it. Your blind spots they say have been well known for decades and so it's no wonder you can't spot a fully-fledged monster at five yards' distance.

I myself tend to discredit the former view. There's nothing wrong with your will. I'm not sure that you did the right thing in booting out Mr. Charan Singh. But it showed courage. And it showed a purposive determined man with a sense of direction.

What then, Prime Minister? Do you really believe that Mrs. G. is more or less like anyone else? Just a bit misled perhaps? With a blind spot for her son, but then which mother hasn't? Yes she created a bad spell for two years, but then hasn't she suffered for it? And after all, a Cabinet Colleague and the daughter of a Cabinet Colleague?

The great problem is that you have a conscience. And men like your-self have absolutely no idea as to what happens to a human being who has never had one, and who in addition has developed and exercised every facet of individual power. The usual words like 'criminal' and ruthless' and 'manipulative' and 'hardened' are simply no longer adequate. Do you think this a bit overblown? Well, allow me to tell you that we observe events on a different time-scale up here. And if you could see what we do, it would make your flesh creep. Your lady friend is no mere national aberration. She is not even a planetary monster like your late mad German dictator. She is, like her only recent parallel Mr. Joseph Stalin, the 'merde de la merde'; and well set on her course of becoming an "Intentional Cosmic Malformation."

Well, I shan't risk your incredulity and impatience by persisting with this line of what must appear to you to be arrantly speculative metaphysics. No, no, we shall come closer home and deal specifically with two concrete issues.

Firstly: have you the right as Prime Minister to deal with Mrs. Candidan your own individual judgment; or even on the collective

judgment of your cabinet? My own feeling is as follows: It is true that Mrs. Gandhi was no part of your election manifesto. But you nevertheless fought on the basis of freedom from tyranny. And the election results and consequently the will of the people, can clearly be interpreted as an overwhelming feeling against Mrs. Gandhi and her tyranny, as well as any possibility of their recurrence. Consequently it would be a criminally irresponsible act on your part to leave Mrs. Gandhi's fate to come nebulous historical process based on the vagaries and delays of your judicial system [which incidentally have become well-known all over our Great Cosmos]. If you and your cabinet colleagues do not act decisively and swiftly to set up special courts or tribunals, then I can only hope that the good sense and courage of your own parliamentary party, will force the lot of you out of office.

Secondly, it is possible that you are suffering from a serious misapprehension. Do you believe that now Charan Singh & Co. are safely out of the picture, factional politics will cease; and you will now be able to govern constructively? You err seriously if you think so. As long as the lady is free to be active, she will politicise every issue (and non-issue for that matter) which suits her. You will not have time to breathe, leave alone govern.

Do not misread all this. Some of us here think of you as the best Prime Minister the country has had so far. But even such a fact is thoroughly unimportant in the face of this single overriding issue. What is a simple blind spot for you will prove to be an irreperable calamity for the country. No, I'm afraid the conclusion is inescapable: if you can't or won't face up to this issue, you must go at once.

It's possible of course that we are doing you a great injustice. Up here we posses the ability to look into the minds of men but we never use it. It is a violation of individual sanctity. So of course we have no way of knowing what is actually in your mind. We have only your newspaper reports to go by.

Finally, can all this be just an attack of squeamishness on your part? Come, come, Prime Minister here is no occasion for delicacy and fine regard. After all, the lady and her thugs regularly amused themselves by sticking a lathi up the collective nether end of a sizeble percentage of the population. Come, grasp the nettle firmly. Need I remind you of the words of a very senior colleague of ours:

'... therefore arise, grasp the bow and strike! By me are these kings slain already.'

# SKY RACES

I T has been suggested that this name was given to the early exploits of men in flying machines, or even to rivalry between missionaries anxious for their converts to reach Heaven their destination. But a hundred years ago Sky Races were held annually in many Indian stations,

including Bombay, Poona, Mahableshwar, Meerut, Rampur and Sadiya. They were races for untrained horses and amateur riders, such as might probably be called Gymkhana races today. Can some reader of *Opinion* tell the editor how the name originated, and when it was first and last applied?

#### THE MOON

Each night the moon cools the sun-cooked Goodies of the world, pats and shapes With weathered hands the dough of grief, And swathes gently the embarrassed Loneliness of middle age, so That again the desired words Are said on balconies, and faded Eyes glitter with hope. The leper Dreams of his own wedding day; with Unflawed arms and legs he sports on His bridal bed, and his girl is So beautiful, her head thrown back In laughter. Not even the new Planetarium that smells of Chrome and rexine can change the moon And its ancient ways, its measured Tread. It is a trained circus dog That shall never miss its hoop. Endlessly healing, it waits for The new day's wounds, just a witch who Fatiens on others' mishaps, lying in Wall behind the mountains for its Appointed hour; then emerging Round faced like a female seer to Seek out the sad and if all else fail, prescribing a draught of thin lunacy to remove the pain . .

--- Kamala Das

### THAT OTHER AUTUMN

There is then the other autumn that knows
No calendars, that carries away
The familiars, placed with scrubbed limbs and
Faces on stretchers in large silent vans,
To the cremation grounds, all littered
Like picnic spots, the faces resembling
The yellow leaves that fall, except for
A little detail or two, the cotton
Plugs in nostrils, the gauze around the chins,

To keep them lifted. Twelve year old Tootie's Father, only fifty years old, too young To go, too handsome for the mattress Of wood, my father, with eyes, haughty, that I closed with my finger tips a few Minutes after death had clouded them; And, Masani. for twenty years, my doctor, Waking me so often out of an Overdose of Valium 5, scolding Me out of my occasional despair ... Yes, last year that rogue autumn visited Us much too often, I feel, And left within me its memory that made me Pause in my talk of happiness. To seek a meaning to the familiar Gestures of living and stilled my laughter, More or less. Does it scatter its seeds Of grief as it moves blindly along with Gusty arms outstretched, does it rain tears on Our sunny lawns? Only the fool-sky is Not aware. It remains blue, speckled white And silver; and the roadside trees put out, Nonchalantly, their routine bloom. There was, After all, only a child, bidding Goodbye, moving out of town, a mother, Rubbing off from her brow, a sindoor mark, A dispensary closing. No need To remember them now, who were burnt To cinders, or eaten by the birds. No need, perhaps, to shake hands with death, Now that it has feasted and gone its way. Winter has settled in the central room Of my mother's house, and none can see her Thoughts for the snow. She lies at night with her Windows open. The stars keep her company, she says....

KAMALA DAS

Vol. XIX

11th JULY 1978

No.

# UTD'S WALKING

### GAURI DESHPANDE

HOUGH the title sounds like an autobiographical novel by sure learnt to walk, one supposes at the age of ten or twelve months. Chie took it for granted that one walks. Having grown up in a reasonably small city, one spent a lot of one's time walking here and there. Walking was everything. It was an exciting partime, a mode of locomotion, an exercise, a means to courtship. And then one grew up, moved to a teeming big city, started to chase after the bitch goddess and realised that she is not to be found by those who bely an their own two feet and one gave up walking, save when it was absolutely necessary, like from the lift to one's front door and so forth. Years passed. This every became a matter, if not of distress, then of some embatrassment. It seemed to have come to stay, and one did not like it. Then one read a book, thus of these new fads. But it was very persuasive. It cound one to take up walking, and at first reluctantly, and then in a spirit of

And so I discovered a list art a lost world, a lost loy. Of course it is not the same for the green hills scound my home should not be insulted by heing compared to the streets of Bombay But the streets of Bombay offer you hidden delights and insights For instance you come to know offer you hidden delights and insights For instance you come to know offer you hidden to the cheaper, source or prove paper greelopes in case the need by never the themself, source or prove paper greelopes in case the need by never the first of your watch patients and repaired a complete on paper street in self-you watch patients are scriptured to watch need by never the first only rude curses and self-solutions. The beginner but to be the your at all. They know the solutions in factor there seem they cannot show with a child on their self-solution with watch the beginner show shows with a child on their self-solution of the self-solution of the particle of the solution of the ones who as a solution of the chest with a child of their self-solutions are greatly the bananewall as the solution of their should be a strength of the solution of their self-solutions. Or source, the solution of the should be painted to the solution of the painted should be painted to the solution of the so

willing to come short distances. You don't really care if the tracks are under water near Masjid Bunder. You do mind falling into the innumerable ditches that the MCGB has thoughtfully sprinkled around the city to test your agility and patience, but you soon become an expert at avoiding those pavements where these are most numerous. And you meet the people. A most colourful sadhu who had enhanced his gerua robe (signifying renunciation) with purple tie and dye sunbursts. A family of half-starved naked children who has adopted a most beautiful, glossy, intelligent brown labrador. A small boy selling green tamarinds who was most surprised to see a grown woman sit down and bargain with him for one and then happily chew on it. He had no means of knowing that it was a feeble (and unsuccessful) attempt on my part to recapture the taste of childhood. Under the various bridges are the slightly more affluent poor of Bombay. Around ten they are just about sorting themselves out of sleep and looking around for the itine ent chaiwala. I am always amazed to see the number and kind of possessions they have accumulated in their tarpauline-plastic sheet shelters. They have all manner of bright and broken things. Leaky plastic pails and mugs are a favourite, next come tin cans of all descriptions, then bottles, half-pairs of shoes, innumerable and indescribable items of clothing, any number of plastic bangles and ribbands, burlap sacks, cinema posters, old toys and headless dolls, the list is unending. And these are of the poorest. poorer than the zopadpatti dwellers, who have some place, some hovel to call their own. These "bridge-basi"s are moved on every few days by the police, I suppose, because I have hardly ever seen the same group in the same place two days running. There is one leper couple with their two small children who own, as far as I can make out, the tatters on their bodies and one pot. The pot is always on the fire and something boiling in it. They are the only ones I have seen in the same place now for over three months. They are the outcastes and have no bridge over their head. They just sit by the side of the road and get wet when it rains. There is a tree nearby but the resident leper under the tree shoos them away if they try to shelter there. They have never asked me for anything, but once I gave the small children a banana each and they were so astounded that I had to urge them over and over again before they would accept the gift. And if anything, that gesture has bred in them a suspicions of me and they watch me warily now from the time I appear on their horizon until I turn the corner.

And of course there is the walking rhythm that brings to your mind tranquil thoughts and memories. The steady and undulating rhythm that brings to you the friends who are all gone and forgotten who shared this very basic and very satisfying experience with you. Some are lost to sight, some even to memory. Some have grown too busy and some are too far away. Some are dead. You remember them, their faces, their words and expressions. You smile to yourself when you remember a joke or two. You feel young again for a moment when you remember the touch of their hands in yours. You almost laugh to think of all the weighty ladies who used to run a giggly downhill race with you. You

wonder if you should hunt up one or two and get them to join you in your pavement pounding programme. But no. That is the most wonderful thing about walking. You are never aware of a need for a companion. Well, of course, if you have one but well, if you haven't. Everyone walking along is a fellow in your thoughts and experiences. I remember the time I walked a distance with a blind man near Opera House who wanted to be set on the right road to the Sassoon Dock. We became very friendly without exchanging a single word. And there's all the avoirdupois which I lost, just like the book said I would Next on the list is the marathon of course.

#### MIDDLE AGE IS CHOOSEY

Youth is for mindless matings, unplanned like the scent Of flowers that grow on mountains, out of reach, Any two bodies would suffice if the season Was found to be fit, and both partners healthy. But in middle age you are choosey about your Needs, you have to be sure that in the game you play You are three, he, you and your love. You have to be Sure that even from across a room, he knows When sitting still to embrace you. You have to hear His vows not with your ears but with eyes, you have To see the love words, not hear them when his lips Tremble and his step falters a little on Your stair. And once in it, you make for yourselves A tent, with your skin and his, prop it up with bones Unleash the bloodstreams so that they make a moat And assure yourselves of privacy. . . .

- Kamala Das

## YOUTH IS AN OLD PHOTOGRAPH

Pointing to my photograph, taken just Seven years ago, the eighteen year old girl asks, Is this really you; and, she says, turning To her friends, this is a beautiful person, I cannot believe that it is she . . .

They are having the time of their lives, making Fun of me. Then, I lie, it is really mine, But taken twenty years ago. Seven years of illness And the fear of death have changed me into this. The young have a right to mock me now. Their skin Is glossy, as mine was once. Their sleep is Sound and painless. For them the Intensive Cardiac Care Unit is as remote As hell, and the pain of illness, a myth,

The skin of their limbs is tight like hose And their breasts are small and firm. If they cut Their hair, in a year, it grows out again. And, when they walk along the streets, lewd eyes Follow their little rumps' cartwheel-turns. Age is their favourite joke and Cruelty club game they play, but, Can they place their feet on my footprints and Follow my trail? Can they keep awake at night With a lantern burning behind their eyes? Can they be convulsed with thoughts that are Hundred percent theirs, disregard Fashion, Ignore all convention, fight back The tears when the vulgar heckle, part with Those who say they love, teeling themselves for A nun's cloistered life, accept as master Not a man with enticing arms, but only Their talent, answer none, but their conscience, Seek no riches other than the small change Of truth that buys so little, and age, Get wrinkled under the eye—for the eye That has travelled much is a weary tramp with a heavy load— Get heart disease—for the heart that has loved much Is fatigued—get white har on their heads—for all The sleepless hours drain slowly the pigments of the night . . .

--Kamala Das

# THE "PROPERNESS". OF MORARJI!!

Not soft on Indira oh, no, perish the thought! Only proper; and so the greatest malefactor in the nation since Independence is, after sixteen most the of his government, and after three months of the receipt by him of the Shah Commission's Report, in the very enviable position of being the Leider of the Opposition, her obvious large resources undiscovered, her treating increasing, her challenge and that of returning tyranny growing. Good Lord, what more would he have done, if he had been soft! I de the beputy Prime Minister?

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# OFINION

Vol. XIX

25th JULY 1978

No 13

# A Proper Prime Minister: is that what everyone thinks he is?

GOPI GAUBA

To quote Opinion of July 11, 1978, "Not soft on Indira, oh no, perish the thought! Only proper; and so the greatest malefactor in the nation since Independence is, after sixteen months of his government, and after three months of the receipt by him of the Shah Commission's Report, in the enviable position of being the Leader of the Opposition, her obvious large resources undiscovered, her strength increasing, her challenge and that of returning tyranny growing. Good Lord, what more would he have done, if he had been soft! Made her Deputy Prime Minister!"

Proper, did you say? Or soft? Not at all! There is no sweetness in Mr. Morarji Desai. I mean, he does not suffer from the natural kindness and generosity of spirit that springs forth from a soft sweet heart.

He is a clean man, yes; perhaps he is a good man as well. His rigorous discipline has kept his body in a trim condition as he would his vehicle with careful coddling. This is also true that our Morarjibhai is an intelligent man and a very clever man too.

But when he was Deputy Prime Minister (whatever the term means) in actual combat Mrs. Gandhi was cleverer than him. She had gauged his ego and knew exactly what she was doing when she took away the portfolio of Finance from him. Predictably the shattered Deputy Prime Minister dashed off his letter of resignation and sent it before better judgement prevailed.

Did the lady gloat over her success and roll with laughter? For, before making it public Mrs. Gandhi most astutely had kept this letter of resignation for some time to herself.

What may have later occurred to Mr. Desai was what he so easily could have done: immediately come to Parliament beating his chest and moaning "Oh, look boys, what our *chokri* has done to me!" All the men present would have teamed up and confronted the lady for an explanation, maybe in one voice. Instead some of them laughed themselves silly, crying, "clever! oh how very claywer..." or words to that effect. Thus are the short-tempered fallen.

I am a housewife, a very ordinary Indian woman. What I say may seem far-fetched to you but sometimes an outlandish conjecture contains several grains of truth in it.

In my view Mr. Morarji Desai is using Mrs. Gandhi as the Tiger-Tiger (Tigress, if you will) to keep his colleagues and erstwhile colleagues distracted. It is a trick, you see. While they are taken up with their fear of She's Return, of her very presence in town and the country, of the evil powers that she might unleash, etc., etc., he, Mr. Prime Minister, will dress up in his Sunday best, and step out to see the world. An eighty-two year old Prime Minister of India, particularly someone with some startling personal fads, is as spectacular as a demure Indian woman Prime Minister wearing an elegant silk sari and speaking French to the French people. Prime Minister Desai must plan several trips abroad: he has charmed the world!

Once the Tigress is killed or maimed or trapped and put away, so Mr. Desai fears, they, his colleagues and erstwhile unkind colleagues may pounce on him.

For, are we not, as a people, expert at (a) sitting on the fence, (b) crossing the floor, (c) bringing out skeletons, (d) using foul language in public, (e) promptly putting into force the mighty weapon of high office.

Come come, there is no mystery. The mystery is that we have not seen through the present Prime Minister's so-called softness towards a past Prime Minister.

Mrs. Gandhi became a terrible despot: off with her. Mr. Desai is a self-centered old man with obsolete ideas: off with him, too. Messrs Charan Singh and Chandra Sekhar have unfortunately for them talked themselves out. So how about Babu Atal Behari as India's Prime Minister?

Mr. Vajpayee is a simple and a ponderous man, not volatile and easy to inflame. He can easily sit with us ladies and sing bhajans. Who knows he may retain his honesty longer than the others could? He keeps good company, one hears.

But as Prime Minister Mr. Vajpayee must forthwith stop going abroad. The fact that an M.P. has only to become a minister and he, or she, is off to see the world has made cynics of us ordinary folk. Besides as parents and as citizens of India we are very tired of things "phoren": of violent films, go-go men, uni-sex obscenely tight pants and all the left-overs of bad habits of the opulent West.

Please let us sit at home for a change, and let us make a concerted programme of clearing up the mess.

[Be it clear that it was Morarji himself who said his attitude to Indira was not soft, only proper, and so attracted Opinion's comment. Even assuming the admittedly far-fetched hypothesis of the article to be correct, may it not be likely that Indira may on a second occasion prove cleverer than the aged Prime Minister, and while he smoothens her onward progress so as to have the threat of her resurgence to power as a weapon against recalcitrant colleagues and partymen, she actually becomes, through his good offices mainly, so powerful, as to bring his party and him crashing down? Morarji must be a far less intelligent man than

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the author gives him credit for being, if he does not see the danger to himself in this course. And for what? To be able to indulge in foreign tours with peace of mind and freedom from in-party intrigue? Well, unless our housewife author knows Morarji's mind better than his Satanic Majesty would claim to ("the Devil himself knoweth not the heart of man"), her imaginative sally must remain at best a wide-ranging flight of fancy, undoubtedly livening up the somewhat dull and hackneyed political scene, and so to be received most gratefully. A strong factor in favour of her theory is of course Morarji's marked complacency. May her underlying assumption that there is now no further danger of Indira's returning to power, prove true, will be the earnest wish of every good citizen of India.—Ed.]

#### COMMENT

(In doggrel appropriate to the subject)
What ails thee, Shanti Bhushan,
Must we justly term thee slow?
Dost thou, in thy rate of motion,
Wish to be behind the snail?
For weeks and weeks, we've been hearing
Of the reference to the Supreme Court
Thou art about to make.
But nothing happens, nothing!

What ails thee, man. What lacks thou? Paper, pen, ink or parchment, Scaling-wax, match or candle-stick? Skilled myrmidons, expert draughtsmen Legal talent, reference tomes? Or does thy heart turn to water At the thought of Indira sweet, "Poor thing, poor thing, why try her? Oh let her go, be done."

If that be then thy feeling Surely thy course is clear, Resign, resign, don't hang on, Thou mightst even defend her ....'

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# OPINION

Vol. XIX

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No. 16

# QUACKING ORANGES AND CLONED EINSTEINS

#### MADHAVA

THE admirers of 'Science' have this in common with the faithful of religions that they stop thinking for themselves. I am not against science and scientists, for no man can reasonably refuse to accept facts; and I suppose that factual truth is what the best scientists are concerned with. But I feel myself free to arrive at my own assessment of the interpretations which scientists and philosophers construct upon those facts, especially when they constitute extrapolations from observed phenomena to moral and philosophical issues which lie outside the scientist's limited field

I have stressed the word 'factual' because, in any area of knowledge, one has to distinguish between observed or recorded phenomena, and the meanings, implications, or interpretations of those observations. The unwary tend to accept such interpretations as having the same validity as the supposed facts on which they are based. The scientific discipline itself is built over a graveyard of misinterpreted facts—theories which were built, built upon, discarded, buried and, sometimes, exhumed. The true scientist therefore holds his findings lightly. One such scientist, whom I admired greatly for his human qualities, told me he was fortunate that his original research findings were still unchallenged. He did not say he was right because he was right. His conclusions would hold good only so long as later observations did not prove them wrong.

Scientists lay claim to the entire field of knowledge about the universe. Yet they themselves limit their claim by defining the universe in terms of observable phenomena—observable by the human organs of sense with their extensions, and including such things as sub-atomic particles whose presence can be inferred only from their observable effects. That this field of sensory perception is an abstract from the totality of human experience should be clear to anyone who can appreciate A. N. Whitehead's remark to the effect that there is no hope for a person who cannot distinguish between a state of the nerves and a state of the psyche.

A 'state of the nerves' includes the whole range of cellular activity involved in an act of sensing, all of which lies in the scientist's domain. A 'state of the psyche' includes the conscious experience arising out of an act of sensing. In simpler terms, the difference is between light of a measurable wavelength and the experience of the colour red. This is,

perhaps, similar to the distinction drawn in Indian philosophy between the *jnānendriya* and the *tattva*, between the nose (including nervous system and brain) as the organ of smell, and smell. 'Psychic experience in these terms is outside the self-imposed limits of 'scientific' enquiry.

Though there are signs that a new generation of scientists is beginning to extend the boundaries of their enquiry beyond the strictly material limits—a step that cannot be much longer delayed in the face of the new concept of 'materiality' posed by nuclear physics—the orthodox line appears to deny there being a distinction between nerves and psyche. It says, in effect, that brain cell activity is thought.

When tracks are observed in a bubble-chamber, the real existence of an otherwise unobservable sub-atomic particle is inferred by reason of the effects produced—a chain of bubbles. But when, associated with a thought of which he is the observer, tracks are observed in the 'bubble-chamber' of his brain, the scientist loses his objectivity, reverses his inferential framework, and says that the bubble-chamber brain has spontaneously produced a thought particle. This comparison is not a close one, because the bubble-chamber is a relatively simple, inert object, while the brain is exceedingly complex. The brain is a two-way system, feeding sense stimuli both to itself and to the psyche, and feeding psychic or mental stimuli both to itself and to the body. Within the limits of his framework, the scientist handles only the measurable components of these two.

Trapped by his self-imposed limitations, the scientist proceeds to assess the whole of human life as if humanity itself were limited to the material components which fall within his domain. This unwarranted extrapolation from factual observation to philosophic conclusion results in a 'scientific' view of man with which the priesthood of science indoctrinates the laity. Determined by the dogmatic premise that materially sensible phenomena are the only facts, the doctrine of the scientific church is necessarily materialistic. And, as in most churches, the priests find it convenient to believe their own rubbish, along with whatever truth is mixed with it.

This doctrinaire attitude, shared by most men classed as scientists, is high-lighted in the attitude towards genetic manipulation and cloning. However, before going further on this controversial subject, I have to assure the reader that I am not, in the present context, concerning myself with emotional reactions to interference with the natural course of evolution and such-like matters.

Also, before saying what I am concerned with, I need to draw a distinction—vaguely defined though it has to be—between the material and physical problems of the social animal homosapiens, on the one hand, and what I feel to be the truly human problems of present-day mankind, on the other. The two are, rather obviously, inter-related, and that is why they are difficult to define. Poverty, for instance, sometimes affects both issues, but alleviation of material poverty does not necessarily alleviate the human component. Indeed, freeing men from mind-dulling hunger and drudgery may even exacerabate human problems. Instead

of being held down and limited to animal necessities, they become more free to express their love, hate, ambitions, aspirations, etc.

It is the expression of these psychic and emotional needs which, to my mind, represents the *human* problem of today. Without belittling the importance of food, health and finance, it is not these which are shaping to destroy civilisation—not quite yet. The human world stands to be destroyed by greed, envy, stupidity—or any other series representatives of negative human characteristics.

Now we come to the point of this article: Do we really believe that a thousand clones of Einstein would not be so stupid as to be greedy and envious? Do we believe that there are genes responsible for greed and envy and that, even if there are, a human being deprived of them would not be a moron? Do we believe that brain size and configuration protects from psychological traumas, inhibitions, opinionatedness, prejudice, selfishness, and greedy ambition? Do we believe that an Einsteinian clone will necessarily devote itself to relativity theory and not to the destruction of civilisation or just to running a grocery store?

It is because the geneticist's fantasy directly affects men that it highlights the evaluation of man subscribed to by the main body of scientists. Without taking the leap into mysticism, but remaining on a plainly human level, one can say that such a mechanistic view of man is both ridiculous and degraded. To solve the human problems of the world we do not need bigger brains and better technology. We need to apply our human ability to control and transmute the outflows of desire which manifest as greed and envy. Every human being has the capacity to do this, for this is what makes him human. But in order to persuade men of the desirability of exercising this capacity, we have first to persuade them that their human problems will not be solved unless they themselves take up the challenge and solve the world problems by first solving them in themselves.

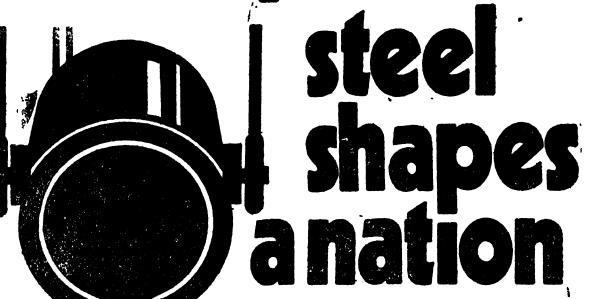
In this context, the scientist's promise to solve world problems through application of scientific discoveries is false. It is worse than false because it tends to persuade mankind that the scientific priesthood holds the answers and that they themselves have nothing to do. The world waits for the scientific millenium when all will be well. This is corrosive of the human effort to be human. It is contrary to human growth. It is regressive.

These assertions are in no way intended to detract from the scientist's very real contribution to human welfare in the past, nor do they imply that equally great contributions may not be made in the future. Other more doubtful contributions, like nuclear warheads, are, for the time being, ratified by what influential public opinion (for what it is worth) regards as the realistic demands of necessity. Yet the question remains to be asked: if the public at large is being fooled into apathetic reliance upon false promises, then who is benefitting?

The answer must be the scientists.

The fact that a man may be exceptional in his professional ability and dedicated to his particular line of research has no necessary bearing

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MIN PROFILE

on his character as a human being. The cultivated public image of the scientist, selflessly dedicated to the service of humanity, as seldom bears close scrutiny as does the public image of the great surgeon. There are scientists and surgeons who are also great human beings—there may even be politicians who are also great as men—but they are not representative of their professions; they are exceptions. There is no reason to suppose that any of them, good, bad, or indifferent, hold the keys to the mystery of human being or the solution to human problems.

Unlike the scientists of a century or more ago, those of the present day are heavily dependent on grants of public funds for their research. Without funds for research projects, the teams of research workers and even many of the scientists might find themselves not only without the means to carry on their work, but also without their jobs. Irrespective of the value of their projects, they therefore have a strong personal stake in keeping their research going. And since, when it comes to presenting claims for funds, they are in a highly competitive situation, there is an unavoidable tendency to overstate the importance of their work. To the same end they are collectively interested in building up the prestige of a non-existent entity called 'Science'. So long as they can get away with the false assertion that in 'Science' lies the answer to all human ills, they are assured of their grants, their salaries, their self-importance, and, for some of them, the coveted Nobel prize.

# ABOUT POLITICS AND POLITICIANS

#### TAYA ZINKIN

M. CALLAGHAN is a born politician. Indeed, it is extraordinary to watch him being Prime Minister. Most Prime Ministers, with perhaps the exception of Morarji Desai, age in office. The burden of responsibility weighs heavily on their brow specially when the country they rule is doing badly—but not so our Jim!

I first met Mr. Callaghan in 1960. He looked older than he does now and he was far less at ease within his own skin. When he became Chancellor of the Exchequer he was ill at ease, bad at projecting his image through the media, and there were many in England who thought that he was a small man risen from the trade union ranks to a position far in excess of his potential. In fact Wilson had picked him to be his scapegoat and I think that Callaghan was fully aware of this. However, I wonder whether either Callaghan, or Wilson, or anybody, for that matter, realised that Callaghan was a born Prime Minister. There are some people who make medicare company directors but superb Chairmen, equally there are people who make pedstrian Ministrs but admirable Prime Ministers and Jim is one of those.

I have watched him grow in stature and in self-confidence ever since Wilson gave him a long rope hoping he would hang himself with it so that, by contrast, the tarnish on the Wilson Aura would be made to shine.



Compared with Wilson, Callaghan in Number 10 is a giant, a natural winner of hearts, a superb vote snatcher and since it all comes to him without effort, he blooms and looks a good ten years younger than he did 18 years ago.

The other day I watched him at work or rather, I should say, at play, when he inaugurated the London premises of the Bharativa Vidhva Bhavan. His youthful and relaxed friendliness-well calculated to win immigrant support in the forthcoming elections—was heightened by contrast with the looks and behaviour of the other VIPs present. Harold MacMillan, who had arrived long before anybody else, looked so old that one kept wondering whether he was able to hear the tremendous applause which greeted references to his name and to the way he had trimmed his sails to the winds of change when he was Prime Minister. Then, there was Lord Mountbatten who looked almost as old and whose voice has assumed the monotonous metallic sonority one does not expect from people unless they be over a hundred. Watching these men I had known in their middle-age made me feel very old and frail and it did make me marvel even more at Callaghan's youthful ways. He spoke feelingly of India's great contribution to British life, stressed that Britain was cosmopolitan and that racial prejudice went back to the first invasion but that it stemmed from ignorance and fear and that after a time the newcomers were absorbed and accepted. This had happened to the Romans, the Normans, the Vikings, the Jews, etc., and it would also happen to the immigrants from the new Commonwealth who were enriching British culture in so many days.

Despite his pressing schedule he spent perhaps an hour chatting to people in the Bhavan, watching them display cultural activities like yoga, dancing, music and he tucked happily into somosas and bhajias after signing autograph books and asking many questions.

There is in Britain a large Indian community. For the purpose of Callaghan's visit to the Bhavan I include Pakistan and Bangla Desh into India. The BBC was filming the event for Birmingham audiences and I have no doubt that the various immigrant publications will give it great prominence and play up all the compliments Callaghan paid India, Indians and Morarji Desai, and it really did sound sincere—Callaghan's great gift is that he does always sound sincere. He probably is.

The fact that this may help at the forthcoming elections is, he would probably argue, incidental and unwitting. I simply watched and admired. Mountbatten who should feel much more at home in India than Callaghan, looked and behaved in a stilted Burrah Sahibish sort of way by comparison.

The reason why I keep harping back to the in-built vote-winning way of the Prime Minister, is that immigration has become a real electoral issue.

Only the previous day Margaret Thatcher who was interviewed on Panorama, accused the Labour Government of misleading the electorate over immigration by not having a register. She insisted that all Indians, Pakistanis and Bangla Deshis residents in Britain should register now the

particulars of those of their despendents who are entitled to join them. Without such a register it will be impossible, she rightly argued, to stop an influx which, under the present conditions of rising unemployment and lowering of standards of living, can only end in tension. She pointed out that the custom is for brides to go and live in the home of their husbands and not the other way round, and she said, quite unequivocably, that a Tory Government would not allow male fiancees to immigrate to Britain.

Mrs. Thatcher is very different from Callaghan; her style is crisp, rather than kindly and she exudes a certain rigid competence which is in contrast to Callaghan's kind of flexible commonsense. Bue she too, has grown in stature and she, too, looks very relaxed and is beginning to improve her personal image. Many in Britain, who used to hold against her the middle class way in which she runs her life and who dislike her unestablishment accent are beginning to relent. For this I suspect that there are two reasons. One is that the combination of Jim as Prime Minister and Maggy as leader of the Opposition is one which is almost as good as having a Tory Government; she pins Jim firmly in the middle and stops him from doing what the Left wants.

The second reason is that things in Britain are deteriorating so much (law and order, civic sense, street tidiness, the economy, unemployment, name it and it is going down hill) that more and more people are beginning to hanker after the good old Victorian Virtues of thrift, and hard work, virtues which are pre-eminently embodied in Margaret Thatcher.

### TO BE ALONE

#### NERGIS DALAL

THE man in a crowd is a weakling; easily swayed by others, open to persuasion which can make him do things of which he will be ashamed for ever after. When he is alone he is a powerful force to contend with, a thinking mind, many times stronger than the collective mind of the crowd. We need to be alone says a Soviet sociologist. Solitude is essential for a person's healthy development. People should go for walks alone, stay up at night when everyone is asleep, and commune with nature in silent places, alone. All great work is done when a human being is alone.

The theory is not new but is perhaps specially relevant today in the context of overcrowded cities and houses in which there is no place for privacy.

There is so much noise that one cannot enjoy the cry of birds in the coolness of the evening, or the silence of the stars at night. We are stifled by our own humanity, trapped by our own limitations. A neighbour goes up on to the terrace each morning to pray, to sit alone, to indulge in reflective introspection. "It is the only place where I can be alone."

We have unfortunately become accustomed to noise as a background to our lives. It has become a way of life. From the moment they open their eyes in the morning, people switch on radios, transistors, television. They listen without hearing, to news about some obscure weed in Australia, or the festivities on Queen Elizabeth's birthday. They are not really listening. It is simply a comforting noise in the background without which they feel threatened. If there is silence then they might be confronted with their own thoughts! And they have forgotten how to think.

Every religion in the world emphasises the need for withdrawal, for contemplation, for silence to listen to one's thoughts in order to come into contact with that essential self, which is buried under layers of noisy ego-econsciousness.

To turn the mind inwards is beneficial not only to the individual himself but to humanity as a whole. The Zen Master sits not only for himself but for the Universe. He experiences two distinct states of consciousness. I am breathing—and then the universe is breathing.

If I had anything to do with it I would make it obligatory for every public figure to spend a minimum of one hour each day in silent meditation. In this state of withdrawal from the world, the mind becomes more sensitive and tends to reach beyond the self. In meditation there is an expansion of consciousness, a thrust into new dimensions beyond time and space.

In Castaneda's three books on the Yaqi sorcerer Don Juan, he is told that in order to "see" one must first "stop the world." "Stopping the world" was a phrase to describe certain states of awareness in which the reality of everyday life is altered because the flow of interpretation which runs without interruption, has been suddenly stopped by a set of circumstances alien to that flow.

Most people are excessively personal. They brood too much on their own ills, worries and resentments. When this happens the vision becomes narrow. The soul can suffocate just as easily as the body; it can die for lack of a kind of oxygen. If the worries, the preoccupation with the self become so oppressive that it turns into panic, then it can be the beginning of severe mental illness.

Vasilievsky sums it up by saying 'A person is better able to reflect on moral issues when alone. He is less short-tempered, better able to find his place in society. Solitude is therefore socially necessary." In Trust For The People... The entire wealth gathered by the Founder of Tata Enterprises, and his sons and successors, over almost a century of industrial pioneering is bequeathed to Tata philanthropic trusts and foundations.

The whole of that wealth is held in trust for the people and used exclusively for their benefit—scholarships for education, grants for rural welfare, contributions for medical research, support for national institutions, and donations for relief from natural disasters.

The circle is thus complete: what came from the people goes back to the people many times over.)



Some of the pro-Indira elite, who find it too difficult to support the Emergency whole-heartedly, take refuge in the argument that anyhow before the Emergency, she was a good P.M. The following article of a day before the fatal date, June 25, 1975, shows she was most certainly not.

### "THERE'S NO HONESTY IN THE"

On the ninth of October in nineteen hundred and seventytwo Siddharth Shankar Ray, Chief Minister of West Bengal, told an All-India Congress Committee session:

"As a Chief Minister of only six month's experience I have no hesitation in saying that none of our policies will succeed unless we are substantially able to eradicate corruption. There is no doubt whatever this is the main problem which all of us should be concerned with."

At the same meeting P. C. Sethi, Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh said:

"Everyone wants to grab money in whatever way he can. If somebody becomes a Chief Minister, he wants to make a fortune not only for himself but for three or four generations to come. If this tendency persists, nobody is going to help us. We have to cure ourselves before we—the doctors—try to cure others."

What is the position to day, two years and eight months later Has corruption been substantially eradicated Have the doctors cured themselves? Alas, corruption has substantially risen even above those high levels, the disease has taken even firmer hold of the doctors. Consequently it is not surprising that, as prophesied by S. S. Ray, "none of our policies" has succeeded, that "the main problem which we should be concerned with" has been totally neglected.

Now, whose has been the principal responsibility in this matter? Why clearly the Prime Minister's, Indira Gandhi's. And how has she discharged it? Why, extremely badly; far from discouraging corruption, she has encouraged it by her own example.

This is the gravamen of this independent observer's charge against you, Mrs. Gandhi. This is why he holds you unfit to continue as Prime Minister. In that position, he considers you harmful to the country, and so he wants you to go. You have issued many statements on administration and repeated many suggestions made in the past, but you have not yet grasped the elementary principle that the essence of any policy is its implementation. Further, that successful implementation depends very largely on honesty both in the policy-maker and in those carrying out the policy.

This being the case, your Hitlerian screeching orations to large populist rallies, arranged by your henchmen, are completely beside the point. They cannot, in the very nature of things, however great their applause, change you from dishonest into honest. On the contrary, they provide to the discerning mind, further evidence of your dishonesty. It may be your hope that at least they will serve the purpose of impressing

judiciary with your popular appeal, and so may perhaps affect its decision in the pending electoral matter. Well, hope is free, though the will are apt to regard it as a dream while awake.

The 'indispensibility' of your 'dynamic leadership' to the country has bein stressed again and again by your close associates and loyal partymen. One may agree that to them you may appear indispensible, for most of them are able to hang on to their jobs and other positions only because of you. They are in fact your creatures. But are you indispensible to the country? In other words, is dishonesty indispensible? Would the country be ruined without it? Consider the matter calmly, dear lady. Perhaps at the hour of conscience, generally about four in the morning with the first waking, even to you may come glimpses of the truth that neither you nor your chosen virtue, dishonesty, are in the least indispensible to the country, that it would do infinitely better without both of you. The realisation may also come to you then that your present plight is almost entirely of your own making, however much you blame others in public. "Only Thyself hath afflicted Thee." As Mirza Ghalib would say, 'God's mercy be upon thee,' and the humblest of his admirers would add 'and thy conscience turn upon thee as a swarm of stinging bees.'

#### IT ISN'T TIME THAT'S PASSING

Remember the long ago when we lay together
In a pain of tenderness and counted
Our dreams: long summer afternoons
When the whistling-thrush released
Its dark sweet secret on the trembling air;
Blackbird on the wing, bird of the forest shadows,
Black rose in the long ago of summer,
This was its song:
It isn't time that's passing by, my friend,
It is you and I....

-Ruskin Bond

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# OPINION

Yol. XIX

1st AUGUST 1978

No. 14

### **ANTI-DEFECTION LAW**

M. M. DAVE

THE law for preventing defections proposed to be enacted hits only defections by individuals or small groups but not when the number of those defecting exceeds a certain minimum. This appears to have been based on the belief that only individuals, and more particularly when acting without the support of other members, act mala-fide, and that when a group of some size resorts to such action, it is bound to be bona-fide. These peculiar political reasonings are not necessarily correct. In the ordinary course it is only the person relying on the righteousness of his cause and having courage of conscience, who individually chooses to displease the group, communal, social or political, with which he has been long associated. To attribute mala fides to individuals leaving a party, and to consider similar conduct as bona fide when adopted by a larger group would seem to be perverse. Even amongst public servants in high office, who can be termed a non-political elite, there are hundreds who combine and strike work to press their claim for higher privileges and benefits, but few who resign on principles.

In politics individuale often choose to contest elections on the selected party's symbol, not because they believe that the party functions on divine moral standards, but simply because they want to avoid a multiplicity of contests resulting in the return of a candidate on a minority of the total number of votes polled. Very often such candidates have to spend their own funds for contesting elections, while the party funds are utilised for those whom the party bosses want to favour. Particularly at the last elections a number of independent candidates, of undisputed moral character and integrity, had to be persuaded to accept the Janata Party symbol. They yielded to such persuasion because they had the country's good at heart and not because they carried any high opinion about the integrity of the political leaders who were in the field. In fact, a number of these were of doubtful reliability, and even guilty of supporting the tyrannous dictatorship so long as it served their personal ends.

Every legislator, on the day he assumes office, swears on oath that he will "faithfully discharge the duty" he enters upon. Now suppose a resolution comes up before the house for condemning the conduct of a minister who has accepted a bribe, or has shown undue favour to his own men and appointed them as directors on the boards of certain public

corporations or other public bodies, or has defied the rules and procedures to secure his personal interest, and the member is fully convined of the minister's guilt, would it be in keeping with his conscience and with the oath he has taken to cast his vote on such resolution on the lines his party boss may direct? If not, should he resign and contest a bye-election if he does not want to deceive his own conscience? And what about the interim period during which the legislature would be passing a number of measures and taking decisions on various important points? Should his constituency be deprived of representation and denied a right to have its say on these points? Further a bye-election would cost him a lot and from where is the member going to be compensated for the loss, if he wins the bye-election? And what penalty is the party boss going to pay on the electors' verdict being against him? Should not in such an event the party boss and his supporters be treated as having lost the people's confidence and removed from the membership of the house?

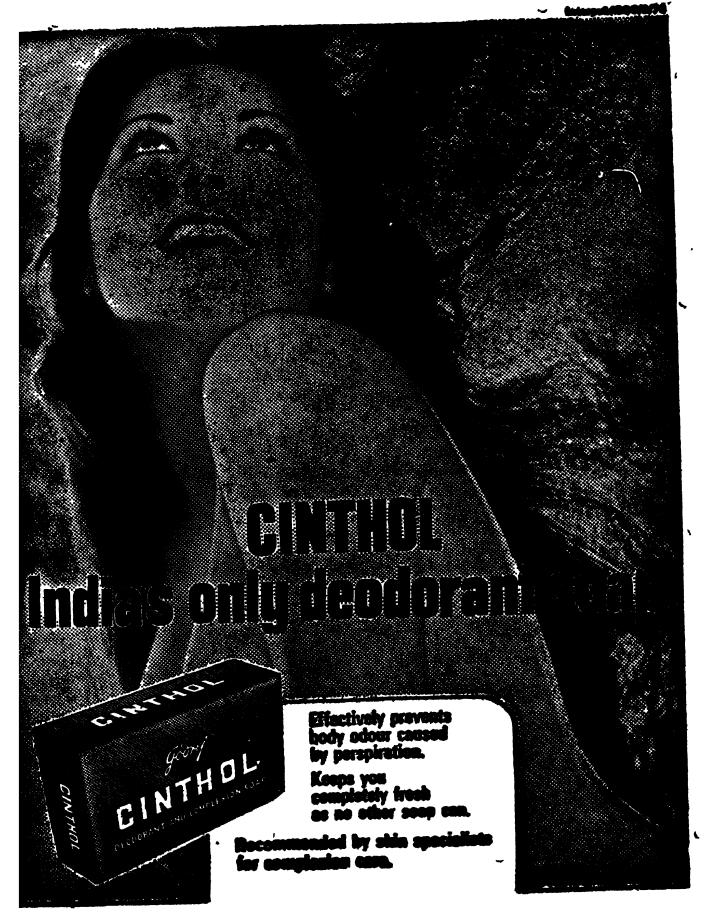
The law should, therefore, make effective provisions for safeguarding the legislator's right to act according to his conscience. If any party boss desires to displace him for whatever reason, he should provide the funds the member would need for contesting the bye-election. If the member loses the election, the party may recover from him the funds provided as a debt due. During the interim period, i.e. until the bye-election is held and concluded, the member should be allowed to continue to exercise his right to attend and speak at the meetings of the legislature. As for his right to vote, when the effect is likely to be significant, i.e. when any decision is likely to be taken or lost by a difference of only one vote, it should be held up and finally concluded in conformity with the result of the bye-election.

Such provisions will tend to prevent the misuse of the anti-defection law by those in charge of the party, whose main object may be to get rid of members whose honesty, integrity and courage to act according to their conscience, would cause inconvenience to them.

### REFERENDUM IN THE INDIAN CONSTITUTION

S. P. SATHE

The Constitution Forty-Fifth Amendment Bill was introduced in the Lok Sabha recently. The bill is only slightly less bulky than the Forty-Second Amendment bill whose provisions it seeks to abrogate. While one purpose of the amendment is to restore the Constitution to the pre-Forty-Second Amendment position, another purpose is to provide adequate safeguards against abuse of power. The controversy regarding the amendability of the Constitution has been raging for quite some time. The Supreme Court held in Kesavananda Bharati by majority. 7 against 6 that Parliament's power to amend the Constitution was limited and could not extend to abrogation of its basic features or destruction of its basic



structure. The main objection against this decision was that the "basic structure" being undefined and vague, there would be uncertainty regarding the scope of the power of constitutional amendment. It was suggested that "basic structure" be defined by Parliament. Another more fundamental objection to Kesavananda was that the judges could not decide ultimately what the Constitution should contain. It was felt that the matter could not be left to judicial determination since the judges were not accountable to the people. At the same time the case for Parliamentary supremacy became weak in view of the manifest abuse of constitutional power during the emergency. The makers of the Constitution had felt that the requirement of a two thirds majority of the members present and voting and absolute majority of the total membership of each House of Parliament could provide an adequate safeguard against hasty and intemperate amendments. It was however observed that the executive government could easily manipulate such a majority. In order to avoid leaving the matter to judicial determination on the one hand and to Parliamentary decision on the other, the Forty-Fifth Amendment Bill introduces the concept of referendum. Will this help us achieve stability and continuity of the Constitution without sacrificing its flexibility? Since referendum is being introduced for the first time, its implications have to be carefully examined.

Article 368 of the Constitution as it stands at present has the following title, "The Power of Parliament to amend the Constitution and Procedule therefor." This article makes it clear that "Parliament may in exercise of its constituent power, amend by way of addition, variation or repeal any provision of this Constitution in accordance with the procedure." The Forty-Second Amendment had provided in clause (4) that no constitutional amendment made whether before or after the commencement of that amendment could be called in question in any court on any The purpose of this provision was to exclude judicial review of constitutional amendments. It was the view of this writer that the Court's power to review survived the above provision. This view was based on the assumption that the law declared by the Supreme Court in Kesavananda remained intact even after the amendment. No constitutional amendment could be challenged in any court on any ground if it was a constitutional amendment. But it could be a constitutional amendment only if it did not destroy the basic structure. The Forty-Fifth Amendment bill provides that—

"if such amendment (a) seeks to make any change which, if made, would have the effect of (i) impairing the secular or democratic character of this Constitution; or (ii) abridging or taking away the rights of citizens under Part III; or (iii) prejudicing or impeding free and fair elections to the House of the People or the Legislative Assemblies of States on the basis of adult suffrage; or (b) eeks to amend this proviso, the amendment shall also require to be approved by the people of India at a referendum under clause (4)."

Clause (4) introduced by the Forty-Second Amendment will be deleted. The new clause (4) provides that all persons who are eligible to vote at elections to the House of the People shall be entitled to vote at the referendum and such a proposal must be approved by majority of the voters voting at such poll. The voters voting at such poll must constitute not less than fifty one per cent of the voters entitled to vote at such poll. By clause (5), the power of superintendence, direction and control of the preparation of the rolls of voters for, and the conduct of, every referendum under this article has been vested in the Election Commission and the result of such referendum as declared by the Election Commission shall not be called in question in any Court. Clause (6) gives power to Parliament to provide by law for all matters related to, or in connection with the referendum.

It is submitted that the above clause will not reduce the uncertainty regarding constitutional amendment. It does not even reduce judicial discretion. Since the words "basic structure" were found to be vague and uncertain the words "secular or democratic character of this Constitution", "free and fair elections" and "the independence of the judiciary" are also vague and uncertain. Whether an amendment seeks to make any change which would have the effect of "impairing", the secular or democratic character of the Constitution will have to be decided by the Supreme Court. Similarly whether an amendment prejudices or impedes free and fair elections will have to be decided by the Supreme Court. Moreover, the bill will not be able to exclude the Kesavananda Bharati dicta because it may survive it. According to Kesavananda Bharati, Parliament has no power to destroy the basic structure of the Constitution. The court may even now say that the basic structure may consist of more things than the secular or democratic character of the Constitution, rights of citizens under Part III; free and fair elections and the independence of the judiciary. What happens if the court holds an amendment unconstitutional on the ground that it tampers with the basic structure but does not come within the purview of the above proviso to clause 2(a) added by the Forty-Fifth Amendment Bill? The Supreme Court's power under Kesavananda Bharati remains intact but it has now further power to decide whether an amendment impairs the secular or democratic character of the Constitution or abridges the fundamental rights or has the effect of prejudicing or impeding free and fair elections to the House of the People or the Legislative Assemblies of States. If the Forty-Fifth Amendment Bill is not able to take away the power of judicial review given by Kesavananda Bharati, what does it achieve? It makes the Constitution even more rigid because now even for a legitimate amendment restricting the fundamental rights, referendum would be necessary.

Referendum will become necessary when the Supreme Court holds that a constitutional amendment is of the nature described in the second proviso of clause 2 of Article 368 which is to be added by the Forty-Fifth Amendment. This determination is no less crucial than the determination envisaged under the majority decision in Keshavananda Bharati.

The only difference is that the decision of the Supreme Court in this matter will not be final. The Government can appeal against such a judicial decision to the people. It would have been one thing if the determination whether an amendment impairs the secular or democratic character of the Constitution or abridges the fundamental rights or prejudices or impedes free and fair elections or compromises the independence of the judiciary were to be through referendum. But this having been determined by the Supreme Court, a referendum will mean asking the people whether they would be willing to surrender such fundamental values which the Constitution has set forth. Here I am reminded of a very important observation of Justice Jackson of the United States Supreme Court:

The very purpose of a Bill of Rights was to withdraw certain subjects from the vicissitudes of political controversy, to place them beyond the the reach of majorities and officials and to establish them as legal principles to be applied by the courts. One's right to life, liberty and property, to free speech, a free press, freedom of worship and assembly and other fundamental rights may not be submitted to vote; they depend on the outcome of no elections.

We have had our experience of the requirement of a special majority for amending the Constitution. A referendum in a country like India could be even worse. This does not mean distrust of the people, but it certainly means distrust of their leaders, who by their demagogy might mislead them. In theory what was wrong in giving the absolute power of constitutional amendment to Parliament? After all Parliament represents the people. But we learnt by experience that during the formative years of Indian democracy a vigorous effort will have to be made to make the constitutional values percolate to the grassroots and be increasingly accepted by the people. Those values must be kept beyond the reach of any majority. It is from this viewpoint that the Supreme Court decision in Kesavananda Bharati must be stabilised. It will be desirable for the time being to live with the decision and let the Supreme Court articulate what the basic structure of the Constitution is.

It is high time we should face the reality of the Indian constitutional system. The distrust of the judiciary dominated the proceedings of the Constituent Assembly and resulted in the replacement of the words "due process of law" by the words "procedure established by law". We are again trying to take away from the judiciary the power to determine what is basic structure of the Constitution. As suggested here, this bill may fail in achieving this. We have to admit that some "inarticulate premise" of the judiciary is bound to stay in judicial interpretation of the Constitution.

"God is a righteous Judge, strong and patient; and God is provoked every day."



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#### THREE FACES

The first was a boy's face, rather pale,
With a pained fleeting smile—he wasn't strong—
But a glint of devilry in his eyes;
For even in a hungry boy, mischief
Won't lie still for long.

The second was a woman's, rather plain. And placid, full of forbearance—
In her gestures thousands of years
Of being woman; but in her eyes too,
A tenderness mixed with pain.

The third was an old man, the skin
Of his face wrinkled like a walnut,
Furrowed by the north wind; eyes rheumy;
But in them a clear reflection of sky and youth and everlasting hills,
And something else, something mysterious and not of himself.
Was it God, or was it myself?

-Ruskin Bond

Would the lady from Kerala who sent two poems recently kindly send in their copies? Owing to my negligence, and perhaps also to the malignancy that on occasion seizes inanimate objects like pens and letters, the poems, despite much searching, cannot be found. I am very, very sorry. So, dear lady, forgive your erring editor thus trespassing on your tolerance, and delight his eyes again with those specimens of your work.

# OPINION

Vol. XIX

**22nd AUGUST 1978** 

No. 17

#### COMMENT

W HAT is the greatest failure of the Janata Government? The non-discovery of Indira's hidden hoards.

As has been well-known from Mauryan days 'The Treasusy is the key to all,' and without the reassurance of these very large funds behind her, Indira, after her electoral defeat, would have been a very different person. In all probability there would have been no Congress(I), with all that implies, including non-exacerbation of social and industrial conflicts.

Why have the hoards not been discovered? Lack of will? At the political end? Maybe. At the executive end? Maybe. Lack of ability? Hardly likely. The intelligence agencies of the Government of India have been known to be quite capable of solving far more complicated problems than this, so it is difficult to believe that if the principal men in these circumstances, and therein may lie the reason for the failure. and made clear to the proper subordinates their sincere desire earnestly, continuously and vigorously, they would still after sixteen months have remained hidden. Corruption on an enormous scale is of course possible in these circumstances, and there in may lie the reason for the failure. The question may occasionally arise in the following form: which is better, to find the funds and receive a commendation, at best a promotion, or to turn a blind eye to clues and receive a numbered account for a quarter of a crore in a Swiss bank! Duty or ease, in fact, and duty under whom? Not superiors one can trust, superiors who can be relied upon to stand by you so long as your actions are bona fide; nay rather, men of straw who will be quite prepared to throw you overboard to save themselves if danger approaches, men, too, about the personal integrity of some of whom at least you cannot be sure. Still, even in these circumstances, some men can be found who will do their duty, placing its full performance above all else, and if the political will at the highest level is really concerned about this paramount problem, it must devote special time and energy to finding such men and using them properly.

Since it is now established beyond question that Kantibhai Desai collected a very large sum for the Janata State elections fund, the question may legitimately be considered, how was he able to collect this large sum? Did people give him the money because he was a citizen of India, as C. B.

Gupta the Janata treasurer implies? Or did they give it to him because he is his father's son, who lives with his father, the Prime Minister, and is in constant attendance on him? C. B. Gupta says he asked Kantibhai to collect for this purpose. Clearly then he must have thought there was something special about him. He judged him to be a person whose requests would be heeded by those who could give, tycoons, etc. Now such people as a rule do not give large sums except in expectation of favours to come or insurance against punishment for past misdeeds. They obviously expect influence to be used on their behalf, so they heed the influential. Would Kantibhai be influential if he were not his father's son? Obviously not. Would he be as influential if he were not living with his father and in daily attendance on him? Obviously not. is not to say that he does influence Government work. He may not, the P. M. may not even discuss anything with him. The question is not however what happens. It is what is the impression conveyed. And the impression cannot but be that he is in a position to influence matters in which he takes an interest and is therefore well worth keeping on the right side of.

\* \* \* \*

Time and again has this writer pointed out since 1950 that it is quite possible to collect funds for elections without any of the chicanery that goes into the process at present, without relying upon the rich, without promising anything to anyone, without hiding anything from anyone. That would indeed be the most important electoral reform, yet neither will any party try it out, nor will any reform committee consider it. They think it best to stick to the old practice of large, generally secret, donations from individuals, who in their turn expect support and favours from them. However, since this question keeps on cropping up, here once again is the simple method of collecting funds for fighting elections.

Suppose the Janata Party enlisted 20-lakh members throughout India or roughly 4 thousand members per Lok Sabha constituency. Suppose it levied a fee of Rs. 12 a year, or Rs. 1 a month from each member, its receipts would be two crore forty lakhs a year. Suppose it spent the forty lakhs on local offices, collection of fees, keeping in touch, etc., it would still at the end of five years have ten crores, with which to fight Central and State elections. And this perfectly openly, without any kowtowing to the rich or the gangster, without using any promises or threats. The first criticism of this usually is Too simple and therefore not likely to work. But isn't breathing both natural and simple and doesn't it work?

Try it, fellow-countrymen, and avoid all the unsavory scandals and general corruption that go along with your present methods, and damn your governments from the moment of their inception, and your legislators from the moment of their election. The very honour of being an M.P. or an M.L.A., standing rooted in the dishonour of the methods by which the funds for election are collected, is it reasonable to expect honourable conduct always from the person elected?

If there were not the very real danger of Indira returning to power should this Government at the Centre fall apart, this writer would turn a blind eye on all the gyrations of Morarji, Charansingh, the mediators, their critics, call down a curse on all their houses, and refuse to look at the reports in the papers concerning them. As it is, one has to keep on observing the daily charge of positions in this most unelegant dance. To all the participants one would say, "Death hovers over you, friends, death at two levels, the death of Indira's accession and natural death. The first will come if you do not stick together, the second may come any how. In both cases, you will go out empty-handed, without pelf or power. So realise your position, and do not be greedy, self-important, conceited. Think not of your own but of the common good and in it find your own."

### LINES TO A YOUNG FRIEND SUFFERING FROM A PROGRESSIVELY BLINDING DISEASE

See the bird on highest wing Glide gently through the azure sky; See the naughty flirting Of a dark-hued butterfly.

See the lotus open wide Her petals of a gorgeous hue; See the clouds chide The sun for burning up the dew.

See the wind play on the corn And rock it in a fond caress See the advent of the storm Reminding one of youthful zest.

See whilst thou may, the little pranks That nature ever loves to play See the ripples on river bank E're thy vision fades away.

#### VIEW

It is being often announced that our Prime Minister, Morarji Desai, loes at claim any travelling or daily allowance while on official burs, but some time back it had come to light that the cost of Mr. Desai's aily books out at Rs. 50. Is it, therefore, the Government case that Desai bears this cost himself while on tour along with lodging charges in public guest houses, and yet does not claim any travelling or daily allowance? Government guest houses do charge for lodging and food the Government servants who take advantage of them and the charges are paid by the Government servants out of the TA and DA they receive. If the P.M. is not bearing himself the lodging and food charges, another point that requires to be clarified is whether the other ministers who charge TA and DA do or do not avail themselves of the facilities of lodging and boarding in the Government guest houses. If these facilities are being availed of free in addition to claiming TA and DA, that would obviously amount to misappropriation.

Even when such facilities are extended by the public sector concerns or institutions that receive grant or aid from Government or exist on trust funds, the virtual misappropriation would be there though in an indirect form, and similar misappropriation would also be there even if the Ministers accept such facilities from any business houses, at least to the extent of 50 per cent, i.e., an amount equivalent to the Corporation Tax which would be available to the Government if the company's expenses were saved and reflected in its profits.

Another point which has now come to light is that the P.M. has charged to the Government a sum of Rs. 3,740 on account of tips paid by him while on tour in India. To whom these tips have been paid and whether they were free to accept such tips under their service rules also requires to be clarified, even if it is assumed that it is open to debit such voluntary and personal donations by a minister, to the Government treasury.

It may be observed that instance other public servants, both political a garlanded and honoured, entertained on official account are not rare; such ment funds require to be a

thich Government officers and "r service, get themselves ner and lunch parties ropriations of Govern-

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### OPINION

Vol. XIX

#### 5th SEPTEMBER 1978

No. 19

#### THE SINO-INDIAN SITUATION

The recent discussion in Parliament about the new Sino-Pak roads shows how far removed from fact is much of our thinking on the Sino-Indian position. In reality, India is independent to-day because China permits it. If China so chose, it could quite easily destroy and render unihabitable in forty-five minutes every Indian city and town from Calcutta in the East to Amritsar in the West. India, in spite of spending enormous sums on defence every year, has no defence against such Chinese action. It could neither prevent it nor retaliate against it. India has chosen to have no nuclear weapons, and so is helpless. It has chosen to be weak deliberately and of set purpose. Time and again in the years from China's first explosion of a nuclear device, has Opinion reasoned with the government and people of India, pointing out the urgent necessity of building up a nuclear arsenal for the mere continuance of the nation's independent life. It has pleaded with them, begged them almost on bended knees to understand their real position, but all to no effect.

Our chiefs Sitting Bull and Running Water were as adamant against the adoption of the new weapons of the yellow faces as the first Red-Indian chiefs of America in their time were against those of the pale taces, and so it would not be surprising if in the long run we the brown Indians too suffer a fate similar to that of the Red Indians. You have brought the almost certain probability of such a calamity on yourselves, good friends. Remember, things are as they are and their consequences will be as they will be. What good then does it do you to equivocate? The essential point is that your independence is based upon Chinese inaction. The moment China acts in right earnest, your collapse becomes inevitable. A very high military man once condenscended to argue with the writer on this subject. "All right" he said 'I concede the Chinese can do the damage and we can't prevent it or retaliate. But what good does it do them? Where is their follow-up?" I pointed to Pakistan (then both East and West) and to the mountain-passes of the Himalayas. The new roads make the answer easier. In addition to the Pakistan forces, the Chinese can through these roads move a guarter or third of a million of their regulars fairly quickly into the right positions.

Why are the Chinese waiting? Remember they have claims against us. According to them, we hold enormous territories rightly theirs which the British filched from them with their bogus MacMahon boundary line. Nearly the whole of Assam, all the northern adjacent areas, and a good deal more along the southern slopes of the Himalayas they want. How-

ever they hold to the ancient wisdom, 'what comes slowly, comes well'. They are consolidating their internal position; they are building up their nuclear arsenal so as to be so formidable even to the Soviet Union and the U.S. that these super-powers, aware of the threat from China to their own cities, will be quite averse from interfering in Chinese plans not' directly affecting them; they are modernising their technology at a fairly fast pace. When they are satisfied they are ready, they will act quickly and decisively. Meanwhile what harm is there in making occasional placatory noises, especially to such wishful thinkers as the Indians? As to Pakistan, they feel sure it is with them. Whatever Pakistani leaders may say, to them India is THE enemy. Their blood tells them that and a good deal of their essential thinking is done with their blood. They have moreover a most humiliating defect to avenge.

What then do we do now? It would be stupid to hold out false hopes. There are some situations which are beyond remedying. When with open eyes and thinking mind, you have, of set purpose almost, walked into a deep bog, you can but drown. Only a miracle can save you then, and this writer claims no knowledge of how miracles are brought about or occur. So, he supposes, you will carry on as you have been doing, concentrating on peripheral issues, not seeing the whole because you are so busy dismantling or building up individual parts, giving full vent to greed, envy, malice. fraud, deceit, hypocrisy, until the Chinese thunder-clap awakens you about the mid-eighties, by which time it is likely they will have made themselves both secure and ready.

One point more. Do not deceive yourselves by thinking the Soviet Union or the U.S. will risk large-scale nuclear war because of your local predicament. Moscow or Kiev is worth much more to the first than all the cities of the Gangetic plain, and New York or Washington to the other. No, fellow-countrymen, in this matter we are wholly on our own. Peoples like the Israeli and the South African, however detestable some of their actions and beliefs, knowing this, have made their own arrangements. They have shown themselves wiser than us. And so, whatever befalls.

#### **COMMENT**

Turning on the Bombay A programme on the radio at five fifty-five in the evening, I heard announced a call to harijans, non-matriculate, between the ages of eighteen and twenty-six, to apply for appointments as tea-boys, khitmatgars with total emoluments of four hundred and seventy-five rupees per month. Lucky tea-boys! Fortunate khitmatigars!

\* \*

Idly turning the knob, one came across BazmeUrdu to discover that the first part of the programme was a long recitation in Arabic and the second a religious discourse. Does AIR hold Urdu to be the language only of Muslims by faith?

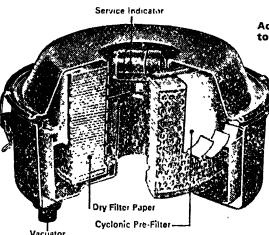


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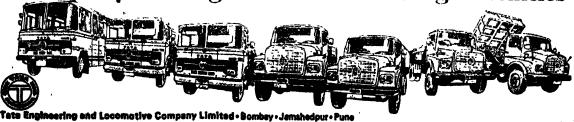
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A general point, while still on the radio. What does AIR think its function is in regard to Western Classical Music? Is it education it has in mind, acquainting the listener with recent musical novelties, or enjoyment in the broadest sense, giving the listener the opportunity to hear and appreciate the best? If it is the second, surely in the very few hours a week it devotes to classical music, it need not go beyond:

BACH, BEETHOVEN, Brahms, Handel, Haydn, MOZART, Schubert, Schumann.

That there is a great deal more of classical music everyone who listens in those, and if he wants to hear it, there is nothing to prevent him going to concerts or records. But why impose something like Vaughan Williams, Tudor Piece on your captive audience when you could quite easily give it Bach or Mozart?

"There's sure no passion in the human soul, But finds its food in music."

"Was it a vision a waking dream?
Fled is that Music:— Do I wake or sleep?"

"All art constantly aspires towards the condition of music."

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# OPINION

**Vol. XIX** 

26th SEPTEMBER 1978

No. 22

#### AFGHANISTAN, RUSSIA AND INDIA

It is idle to deny that the recent change in government and regime in Afghanistan has greatly strengthened the Soviet position. If not yet a Cuba, Afghanistan is fast becoming one, and the day is approaching when Afghanistan will be a no less potent weapon for realising Soviet aims than Cuba has become. What then are these aims? In the immediate future the domination of South Asia and the Indian Ocean, with the ability to prevent oil from Iran, Arabia and the Gulf states reaching its present customers, the Western powers, Japan and ourselves, except on terms agreeable to the Russians.

When therefore your Foreign Minister talks fulsomely about the great solidarity, the ever-growing friendship, the increasingly close ties between his government and country and the Soviet Union, realise, oh Indians, that he is talking about strengthening even further what always was a potential, and has now become a real, menace to your freedom and democratic way of life. The Russians may not occupy your territory; their ukases will occupy the minds of your ministers at Delhi and elsewhere. Talking of being truly non-aligned and completely independent these will do the Russian will just as much as the N. Korean, if not the Polish or East German, governments do. You will become a part, albeit a loosely-held part, of the far-flung Russian empire, a sad end, do you not think, to a national history of thirty-one years of independence?

Can this be avoided? The next few years will tell, but it certainly cannot be if as at present we tie ourselves closer and closer to the Soviets in every activity, open not only our portals but our most secret places to their penetrating gaze, treat them as revered elder brothers full of wisdom, knowledge and good-will. No, a far more correct, less intimate, relationship needs to be established and maintained. Can we do it after the euphoria that has prevailed at the highest quarters? Yes provided those there take seriously the Russian aim and plan and do not dismiss it with the usual gambit of "Oh, Reds under the bed! What nonsense!"

It is unfortunate but none the less true that the enemies of the bad are not always good, and that in order to avoid the victory of the worst, common cause has sometimes to be made with those who may be just a little less bad than the worst. Our rulers might recollect the story of the man on the river-bank engaged in battle with a tiger, who was very grateful to a crocodile which caught the tiger by its tail and thus enabled the man to destroy his powerful foe.

The entire wealth gathered by the Founder of Tata Enterprises, and his sons and successors, over almost a century of industrial pioneering is bequeathed to Tata philanthropic trusts and foundations.

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The circle is thus complete: what came from the people goes back to the people many times over-



#### CLEVER, CUNNING CALLAGHAN

#### TAYA ZINKIN

R Callaghan has been playing cat and mouse with everybody: his cabinet colleagues, Parliament, the Trade Unions, the Opposition, the B.B.C., the press and the public. He has kept them on tenter hooks guessing about the date of the next general election. They have spent time and money preparing themselves and when he announced his ministerial broadcast they were ail on their marks, ready, steady, to go . . . like good athletes in a well rehearsed Marathon; after all general elections have been half a dozen in the past twelve years. And then just as Ladbrooke was totting up the odds, the Prime Minister let everybody down by pricking the balloon. In the national interest there would be no election, he told the electorate glued to television, and the way he explained why was almost worthy of Wilsonian deviousness.

Naughty Callaghan, not supposed to misuse the media simply because he is Prime Minister! Such broadcasts are for events of great importance. A non-election (as distinct from announcing the date of an election) is a non-event. Therefore he should not have used the prerogative reserved by tradition and statute for events, just to play tricks or improve his public image.

Naturally, everybody is cross with Mr. Callaghan; most of all, of course, the Tories and the media who feel cheated. The press points out that all Callaghan required to lay speculation at rest was a communique from 10, Downing Street or a word at the Trade Union Congress jamboree which preceded his announcement by a few days. The Tories are furious like the T.U.C.—strange bedfellows indeed—because they say it is not in the national interest to prolongue suspense. The Government may fall anytime once Parliament reassembles since it is hanging on by the skin of one tooth; what Britain needs is a strong Government which can govern and not a government which depends on whipping every vote into the lobby.

The debate will continue, presumably as long as this Government remains in office. But, if one looks at the issue dispassionately what does one see? First, did Callaghan abuse his ministerial privilege in going to the Nation on T.V. under false pretences? The answer is probably "Yes" but the peccadillo is tiny compared with the graver charge that he should not have diffy-dallied and kept everybody guessing for too long. That charge can stick because uncertainty breeds inaction and inaction breeds economic stagnation—a malady Britain can ill afford now that it is the sick man of Europe. Every week of added uncertainty is a week during which capital which might get invested in production is kept either in cold storage or abroad. Therefore Callaghan should have spoken earlier. But, and here he can claim extenuating circumstances, even now that everyone has been told he is not calling a general election, the uncertainty remains because he can be forced out by a vote of no confidence. And, with the precarious balance of power in the House,

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this could happen any day. From the point of view of scotching uncertainty nothing much has been changed by his behaviour. Therefore, on balance, he should be absolved of the charge of trickery.

Now let us look at the real issue. Has the Prime Minister acted in the national, instead of his own, interest as his critics maintain? There, despite the fact that I am a Tory and a keen supporter of Mrs. Thatcher, I must declare that I do think that, whatever his personal considerations, Jim Callaghan is serving the national interest by postponing the election.

Had there been an election at the end of September or the beginning of October, as people expected and seem to want, Tories or Labour would have been returned to a hung Parliament, either as the biggest single party or with a small majority. If the Tories formed the government there would be a confrontation with the Unions over wage claims and productivity. The outcome could well be a further loss of confidence, a flight from the pound, a moratorium on investment. In the end, I would hope for a Tory victory over militant trade union leaders but there could be so much bitterness that it would give a shot in the arm to the kind of class war some trade unionists are trying to stir up. If, on the other hand, Labour scored a precarious victory, trade union tigers would ask for blood and the increases their more militant leaders are already shouting for now. This would lead to spiralling inflation and undo whatever good is going to be achieved by the measures the present Government has embarked upon, despite the T.U.C.

Therefore, either way, an election now—called by the Prime Minister, or forced on him by Parliament—is not, in my opinion in the national interest. A Winter election, or an election in the Spring would be far better. As a Tory I would prefer a Winter election because in Winter people grumble and tend to vote against the Government. But leaving that aside, an election from say, March onwards, is in the national interest for the following reasons

Either Mr. Callaghan gives in to the trade unions and follows policies which harm the economy and Britain's credibility as a country determined to play its part in Europe and the rest of the world, not overlooking Rhodesia's hornet's nest, or he does not. 'If he does there will be such a revulsion against Labour that the Tories will come back with the majority they require to govern. Even the Wedgie Benns and the Mcgaheys and the Foots will have to recognise the electorate's mandate and pipe down; the Marxists et al. will have to behave. This is obviously in the national interest.

On the other hand, if Callaghan stands firm and refuses to yield to the Trade Unions, things will improve; his present measures will bear fruit and the electorate will reward him with the majority which gives him the mandate to squash his Left and his infiltrators. That too, is in the national interest. In the meanwhile, by doing nothing, he can muzzle the Trade Unions quite effectively and stop their demands from escalating. After all, Tom Jackson, the Chairman elect of the T.U.C. has already pointed out that the onus of keeping Labour in power falls upon the T.U.C. If

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Labour is returned with a sizeable majority Callaghan can then say, rightly, that the nation has voted for his policy of wage restrain and that he is going to continue with the same policy. So, whichever way the penny drops, if it is next year, the national interest will be better served than by it dropping now. Callaghan is not cunning he is clever. Next year, let the best man—or woman—win.

#### KORCHNOI AND DR. ZUKHOR

#### NERGIS DALAL

It is a little surprising to see so much amused scepticism about the thought waves that the Soviet psychologist is supposed to have been sending out towards Korchnoi to interfere with his play

Telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition and psychokinesis are all part of the accepted science of parapsychology and much research is being undertaken into it by trained physicists, neurobiologists, psychologists, psychologists, psychiatristis and physicians. In the United States, the presitigous Stanford Research Institute which carries out high calibre research for the Departments of Defence and Industry, is also undertaking parapsychological research. The scientists came out with this cautious statement:

"We have observed certain phenomena for which we have no scientific explanation. All we can say at this point is that further investigation is clearly warranted."

The direct transmission of thought from one mind to another (or to several others) is known as telepathy. The beaming out of thought waves, either positive or destructive, is possible if the mind's attention is so concentrated that it reaches a single point of intensity. The wandering intensity, diffuse and irrational, is pulled tight, as if slack cables had suddenly taken a weight, and this "inner tightening"—the aim of all religious, mystical and occult disciplines—is capable of producing startling results.

The Soviet Union has more than twenty-five centres for the study of parasensory perception with an annual budget that exceeds twenty million roubles. To win the world chess championship is not only a matter of prestige for them. They are eager to see Korchnoi, the Soviet defector, the enemy, defeated.

Brunton claimed "that any idea that is peculiarly concentrated upon, tends to realise itself." Clocks can be stopped by intense concentration, and Jung claimed that "in deep emotional crises the mind exerts an influence on matters which lie outside our bodies," and he went on to describe how one day a household article broke into two during a period of emotional crisis in his early years. Among adults who are close to each other emotionally, there is often a thought-transference, depending on a feeling of sensitivity towards each other and a certain stillness of the mind. This is unconscious telepathy, like the automatic crossing of telephone lines. Conscious telepathy is far more powerful and sustained.





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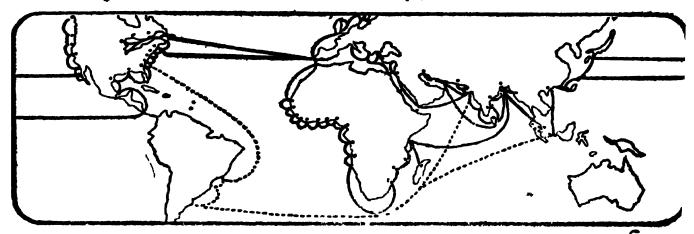


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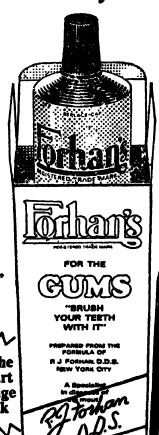
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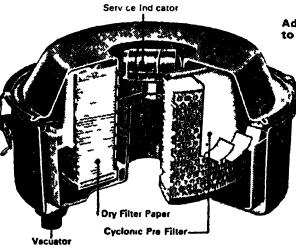


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The poet John Coper Powys, in his autobiography, wrote that he discovered quite by accident that he possessed what might be called 'the evil eye' towards people who had injured him. When he discovered that someone whom he hated or with whom he was furiously angry, invariably, fell down and broke a leg, injured his head or even died, "it became a habit with me to pray to my gods anxiously and hurriedly for each new enemy."

Bernard Shaw also had a very strange experience. He was making a passionate appeal for the playwright Harley Granville Barket not to abandon the theatre, when he felt a violent pain in his back, and his spine became absolutely rigid so that he could not even bend down to get into a taxi. For one month he lay on his bed in pain until a friend told him that Granville-Barker's new American wife, who had forced his retirement for the theatre, was leaning forward and staring at him with such fixed intensity and hate that he was certain she was consciously willing him harm. When Shaw heard this he forced himself to get up and go for a walk and the pain vanished as suddenly as it had come.

In this important chess championship, to have Dr. Zukhor sitting for five hours at a time with his inimical gaze fixed unwaveringly on Korchnoi, would in itself lead to a state of confusion and tension, interfering with Korchnoi's ability to concentrate. If Zukhor was also engaged in beaming a stream of psychic malevolence at Korchnoi, it might well have traumatic results.

Interestingly enough, when the two Ananda Margis entered the room and sat meditating and sending out positive thought waves in Korchnoi's direction, Dr Zukhor seemed perturbed and for the first time got up and wandered in and out of the hall, instead of fixing Korchnoi with an unwavering stare

Perhaps it is too much to claim that this pressure on Korchnoi accounted for his consistently indifferent play, even when he had the advantage in certain positions. But in future matches it might be possible to leave the two players entirely alone and allow the play to be watched on close circuit television or something similar. Mental concentration and the intensity of thought is vital to chess—if this is diffused, or filtered, by any sort of outside interference, it must affect the player and his moves.

### OPINION

vol. XIX

24th OCTOBER 1978

No. 26

#### OF LEADERSHIP

HAS the partition of the old India been a blessing to the two successor states? No, it has been a positive curse. Pakistan, after more than half its independent life as a dictatorially governed country, now seems to be settling down to a permanent dictatorship under the military. India having had nineteen months of dictatorial rule, has managed to get back to democracy, but with a government so inept that the former dictator, instead of, at the least, voluntarily retiring from political life, is contesting a seat for the Lok Sabha and is the chief of the principal Opposition Party. Truly has the leadership in Government bent over backwards to oblige her. And it continues to do so. There are numerous criminal charges pending against her; yet she is permitted to leave India to attend to some life-and-death matter, perhaps you will say? Nothing of the kind, to attend an anniversary celebration of her father's birthday, which some Indian associations abroad are holding!

Miserable leadership, that has been the curse of both states from the beginning! In fact, but for that, there would still have been, to the great advantage of all the inhabitants of the sub-continent, only one country in it, India. Alas, that two truly great and courageous Indians like Gandhi and Jinnah, should have failed so signally to perceive that partition was a remedy worse than the disease they were seering to cure. Alas that the quality of true leadership was not in either! Jinnah with his obsession for a state for the Muslims was so lost to all ethical values that he adopted 'direct action', looting, burning, ravaging the other community, as his method to get political leaders to accept his goal. Gandhi, having said he would never agree to partition, finally agreed, the lure of power having become too attractive for his principal followers to resist any more. His own weapon, the fast, which had produced results in many extremely difficult circumstances, he did not use to avert this calamity, though later he adopted it to get for Pakistan, then at war with India, its share of the Central balances.

Associated with this level of leadership at the highest on both sides was Mountbatten, obsessed by the desire to hand over authority as quickly as possible, almost unconscious of the fact that in his mad haste he was destroying what his predecessors had built up over a century, the faith and trust of the people in Government, not in the British Government, but just in Government as such. This destruction in its turn led to enormous mass migrations, and the tragedy of millions of deaths. On these three,

then, lies the guilt of partition; Jinnah and Gandhi and Mountbatten were primarily responsible. Mountbatten could have said, I do not demit authority except to an all-India state, but he chose not to. He was a man of experience in administration and government, so to him the consequences of a partition of this nature in the short-term and in the long should have been clearer than to the other two, who had spent their lives in other pursuits. But he had come to hand over power, and that he would do with the utmost expedition, whatever came afterwards. Nothing, in fact, became the British better than their decision to hand over power; nothing became them worse than the way in which they handed it over.

This having been the manner of the birth of the two states, perhaps it is too much to expect from their leaders model behaviour in the democratic pattern. Why is it, for instance, that by now every village has not an untainted water-supply? It could easily have been, but it is not. And so in many other matters affecting the ordinary people. The means are there, the technique is known, only the will has been missing. More kudos by far, and perhaps more profit too, is to be found in the gigantomania and facadism that has distinguished New Delhi and Islamabad, and the various provincial capitals in the years since Independence than in humble necessary tasks like provision of pure water, primary health or approach roads for villages.

On this matter of proper leadership, an article of twenty-one years ago is in large part relevant today:

#### FAILURE OF INTROSPECTION

The post-election period has seen Mr. Nehru deeply engaged in introspection and party examination. While the statements that have resulted from these processes are well-intentioned, they are not distinguished by grasp of the essential.

In his search for the right answers to the many difficult matters with which he is beset, Mr. Nehru would do well to remember the core of the tradition of the Hindu political theorists, namely, that the problem of government is the ethical problem of the individual projected on the field of the state and that its solution lies in right doing; that consequently, the keys to sound government and prosperous society are the personal integrity of the ruler and the moral sense of the citizenry, and further, that no trick of administrative technique or organisation, no constitutional devices or amendments can save a government, state or political party lacking these essentials.

Always remembering this and looking at the Indian scene in the light this throws upon it, Mr. Nehru may proceed to put to himself some questions. Since the overall ethical problem begins at least with that of the individual, the first few might well concern himself.

Getting right answers to these would also be helpful in dealing with the others, since, in the words of Confucius, the gentleman preaches according to his practice. Mr. Nehru might begin by asking himself: Why do I accept presents? Pictures of me are shown in several of the papers riding a horse presented to me by a private individual. Presents of all kinds come to me, small and large. They may be as insignificant as mango baskets, but why do I have to accept them? Does it set a good example?

Why do I let flattery affect me? Surely I have no need to hear praise of myself. Is it true that many people can get me to serve their ends by flattery? Is it also true that I am inclined to take a very poor view of those who are not openly appreciative?

Am I responsible for the creation of the atmosphere of darbari that is said to surround me now? Is it true that my personal private secretary has acquired such great influence because of this, that many Ministers, to say nothing of Secretaries, pay him court and ask for his help?

Do I hate to hear the unpleasant truth so much that most people will not tell it to me, and even the frankest hesitate? Is my approach such that I make it clear that all I want is agreement with my views?

Do I bear, sub-consciously perhaps, a grudge against those who hold on to contrary opinions? Does my countenance become completely stony when anything I do not like to hear is told to me, especially about somebody of whom I am fond? Do I entirely reject from consideration any such statement, even when wholly bona fide?

Passing on to the party sphere Mr. Nehru might ask himself: Where does the money to keep this party going come from? How much was spent on the last elections? Are there any overall accounts available? Are they properly kept? How many people gave over a thousand rupees? Do large speculators and businessmen supply the bulk of the funds in lump sum contributions? Is payment also made in cash so that hidden black market money gets passed on? Why do such rich men make these large contributions? Do they get any promises in return? Were they or some of them in fact favoured during the last five years?

Is not the result of this method of fortifying the party chest, the selection of candidates who will be amenable to the pressures brought to bear upon them? Does it not seriously discourage straightforward, public-spirited people from entering the political arena? Does it not lead to lack of contact between the legislator and the mass of his constituents? Does it not make the legislator feel totally independent of them? Is this not a system that is liable to any amount of corruption since even in collection and expenditure there is considerable scope for leakage? Ought not the first endeavour of anyone seeking to establish healthy political life be obtaining funds for the party from a large number of regular small subscribers, spread all over the country, subscribing because of their liking for the cause and their faith in it, the money collected being subject to proper control and audit so as to leave no room for any suspicion of misuse? In the absence of some such scheme, with political life corrupt at the very root, can there be much hope of purity at the later stages?

Mr. Nehru states: "The public has lost by and large its respect for the integrity of the average Congressman." He also realises that what the government dock very portant for the Congress organisation, the administration being "Lyou like, the executive branch of the Congress." Surely then he might ask himself, is not the loss of the reputation for integrity due to the behaviour of my own government? Have we set a proper example in this matter? Have we taken action against prominent Congressmen in governmental positions who have acquired reputations for corruption? Have we even ordered a proper enquiry when bona fide allegations have been made against important State ministers?

Mr Nehru is at his worst when he is bemoaning criticism. Buoyed up by the praises of his favourite Appleby, he strikes an attitude of bewilderment that despite great achievement, the people of the country should still criticise. He seems to fail utterly to understand that in any society, along with achievements, there may also go great faults, and that while there may be praise for the achievements, there must certainly, in the interests of health itself, be criticism for the faults

Mr Nehru's statements are marked, alas, by the failure of introspection to penetrate deep enough. Always not much below the surface, comes the hard layer of complacency, blunting the instruments his mind uses, and so tiring him that thereafter he is happy to leave bad alone. Every great man must have some defects, but when the great man is Prime Minister of a country that has reached India's present stage of political and economic development, very few defects can be so costly and damaging a liability to it as his complacency.

9-5-1957

#### **VIEW**

Ka Na Subramaniam: Thirty years after Independence it should be clear to him who runs that one language for the whole of India for purposes not only of communication but of education, both higher and lower, is a prime necessity if we are to avoid fissiparous tendencies that are on the upsurge English has served the purpose of unifying India to a certain extent and it practically:

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

31st OCTOBER 1978

No. 27

#### IN THE MOONLIGHT

O the dervish Alvarogh, it was a strange night. He had fallen asleep with the sunset as usual but instead of sleeping on to the morning, he found himself after a couple of hours seated at the cave entrance, gazing out upon the moon-lit earth. Nor was the moonlight strident, glaring; no, it was soft, mellow, and took his mind back to his youth, over sixty years ago, when such nights had been to him nights of adventure, of love and song and carefree laughter. After many, many years, memories of that time crowded back on him; its scenes became vivid to him again, and he began judging himself and them from the vantagepoint of to-day. There was much ignorance undoubtedly, but such splendid spontaneity; one saw, one loved, one acted; and was there much harm in it? No, hardly any real harm, no cruelty, no meanness, no lack of consideration, only a great deal of giving and taking of love, of willingness to stand up to any obstacle at any moment, to risk life, limb, the future and the present, all alike for the sake of a kiss, a lover's meeting. Aye, it had been a wonderful time, he would not have missed it, nor was he in fact repentant about it, however it might seem from the common, worldly point of view. Let the Davar count it as sin if he thought fit. To the dervish with his admittedly much more limited outlook, it had been as he recalled it a period of joy and tears and laughter and adventure, when the blood had not just circulated but pulsed through the veins, when every morning was truly a new day, and whatever it brought, good, mad or bad, merited the same eager smile.

Suddenly, he sat up with a jerk. Surely, the past had evoked visions, for who was this very attractive lady walking so gracefully towards him? Closing his eyes, he re-opened them again. No, she was still there and approaching nearer. Good, let her come and state her business. It was the dervish of four-score she was coming to see. so the former youth in his twenties need not feel agitated. Halting in front of him, the lady bowed deeply and said "May I sit?" As he nodded she sank down on the earth in front of him, and said, "My slower companions are no doubt cursing their way up the hill-side and should soon be here. They would have waited for the morning before approaching you, but when in the clear moonlight, I saw you come out of the cave and take your place at the entrance, I could not bear to wait any longer. So here I am. If you wish not to be disturbed until the morning, say so,

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and I shall disappear. But if not, my tale is urgent and I would beg you to listen." Proceed, he gestured.

"I come," she said, "from the land where the people rule themselves. i.e. rule through their representatives whom they themselves have elected. You have heard of us and our system?" "Yes and I know how you went off the track for a time owing to the machinations of a dictator, and are now, by the grace of God, back on the track again. So spare yourself and me the history and go on to your question." said the dervish. "Do you know where the former dictator is now?" asked the lady. "Why in jail, I suppose, or perhaps, if you have been specially magnanimous, leading a private life in reasonable obscurity." "That's it," said the lady, "Learn, oh dervish, that our ex-dictator is at the moment fighting an election to be a representative of the people again. She is already defacto head of the principal Opposition party in the country. She has plenty of money from the past well-hidden, and she seems set on the way to become most dangerous again. So what do we do?" "What you have not done upto now amazes me" said the dervish. "Tell me, have you a government at all capable of governing or a set of prating ideologues who talk and preach and think that is governing? I am amazed that any government, worthy of the name, should have let this obvious enemy of the country and the people, get so far in her quest for power again. What is the secret? Are there friends of hers and enemies of the people within the governing circles themselves?" "That I do not know," said the lady. "At times, it seems very like it. That the government, especially in the highest ranks, has been very lenient towards her, is well-known. But then what can you do? In the midst of our factionridden politice, no other government is possible. And she has the money, great gobbets of it. And nobody in Government will, or can, find where it's hidden. So her path seems reasonably clear. Now, tell us what to do ?"

"Are you sure she will win the election?" asked the dervish. "No I am not," said the lady. "But in her case, I presume the worst." "All right, so, what next?" said the dervish. "Leader of the Opposition, she proceeds to split the already far-from-homogenous government side, succeeds in attracting a sufficient number of members over to her side, produces a majority and takes over the Government, or before that happens, gets a sufficient number of the Government side over to compel a coalition and returns to power. Thereafter, by the end of a year or so, a much more rigorous dictatorship than in the past, liberty extinguished for the foreseeable future. It's all so clear, and what makes me despair is that nobody sees it. They're all busy with making excuses while she takes the next step, and when it's taken, they say, oh well it's taken. Perhaps it won't be so bad. In any case, there's still this and still that and we shall see and such idle talk," said the lady. "So tell me, what do those of us who love the country and freedom do?" During this last exchange, the lady's





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companions, a middle-aged man and a younger woman had joined them, and they too nodded emphatically as she finished.

"Well," said the dervish, "I would not wish to minimise the difficulties of your very hazardous position. If this woman is as lethal as you sayand from her past, and your present judgment to which from observation of you, I am inclined to attach importance, I agree with you she is -then nothing remains but to fight her all the way, anticipate her every step and take defensive action in advance. Your difficulties are of course multiplied many times if your Government is soft towards her, doesn't see her deadliness, is lukewarm in talking action against her, let's the law's delays, the formalities of administration, aid her. Get a better Government, if you can. If not, carry on, persuading, arguing, urging. You will often not succeed, but now and again you may, and in any case, what else can you, ordinary citizens, do? In the last resort, if all has failed and she is dictator again, what you should do let your conscience tell you. There can be no better guide, no better adviser then. And now, farewell, good fortune attend you and God's mercy be upon you." The lady and her companions rose and bowing low, departed. The dervish sat on, murmuring to himself the prayer for the perplexed in conscience, then rose, went into the cave, and lying down on his mat, was soon asleep.

#### OH, OH, OH, MR. HEATH!

#### TAYA ZINKIN

TED heath is a small man. I always thought so, now the British public shares my view. His performance at the Tory Party Conference has at last opened the eyes of his followers—and sealed their lips. As a result his efforts, instead of dividing the Tories as he hoped, are i iting them.

The issue Mr. Heath chose to stab Mrs. Thatcher in the back with, this once too many, is his open support for Callaghan's incomes policy. What Heath expects to achieve by being deliberately and consistently cadds. Thatcher is not clear; but then those whom the gods wish to distroy they make mad. I have watched Ted Heath, year after year, going out of his way on television to be rude to the leader of his Party. On one occasion at the Annual Conference, as he passed beside her proferred smile to take his place on the rostrum, he pretended she did not exist. On another occasion he contradicted her and criticised her policies, whenever he got a chance, even creating opportunities to do so. And now, he has actually gone out of his way to support the other side, implying in the process that he. not she, has the national interest at heart.



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Perhaps Heath does have the national interest at heart, indeed why shouldn't he? However, like Mrs. Gandhi, he has fallen victim to the delusion that he, and he alone, should be in charge if Britain is not to perish. If disaster were to follow the election of a Tory Prime Minister not wedded to Heathism, Ted Heath would gloat because he could then get up and shout "I told you so". Like so many others before him he has become the object of his own obsession. What matters to him now is less the result of his actions than to be proven right. He is indeed a rigid, petty and contemptible man; a man whose behaviour over the past four years makes it really difficult to remember that Britain, and Europe, do owe him a great deal for his leadership over Britain's entry into the Common Market. The same rigidity which brought him down because of an avoidable head-on clash with the unions in 1974 and which explains his precent caddish behaviour was responsible for his propelling Britain into Europe. However, whereas it can be argued that rigidity can be a quality in a Prime Minister—though too much of it would be as fatal as too much flexibility—it becomes mere self-indulgence and meddling in an ex-Prime Minister. Harold MacMillan remained silent the moment he left number ten and even Harold Wilson-whose character leaves so much to be desired-has refrained from telling Callaghan what to do. Not so Ted Heath, who has the habit of Kibbitsing. What is tiresome in bridge is impermissible in politics where players cannot be told how to play their hand by onlookers and be expected to lump it Indeed Mrs. Thatcher has shown angelic forbearance, probably in the calculated hope that given enough rope, her arch enemy would hang himself, which is what he has just done.

For years I have been puzzled. Heath the Prime Minister used to behave like a wooden puppet, even his smile was so automated as to be predictable and incongruous. Yet Heath the conductor did come to life and could smile—as distinct from drawing the corners of his lips towards his ears with a show of teeth. I think I have at last worked out why Heath the conductor was human, unlike Heath the public figure. Politicians have to court approval whereas, armed with their baton, conductors command. A small man playing a part too big for him can only feel secure and relaxed when he cannot be challenged.

Mr. Heath had already tarnished his image by the commercial zeal with which he promoted the sale of his books with the razzmatazz of a jazzed up train from which he signed copies all over Britain with a Texan—like lack of taste and self-consciousness. And now, by the sheer venom of his behaviour to Mrs. Thatcher, Mr. Heath has pricked himself back to size at last.

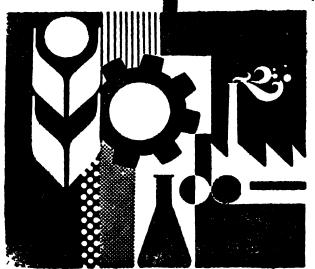
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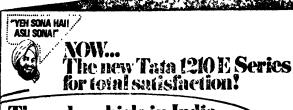
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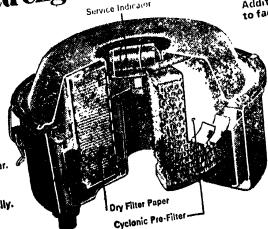


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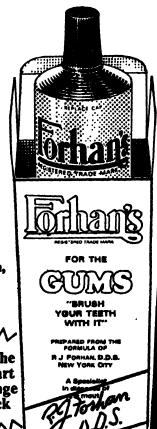
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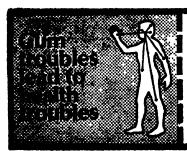
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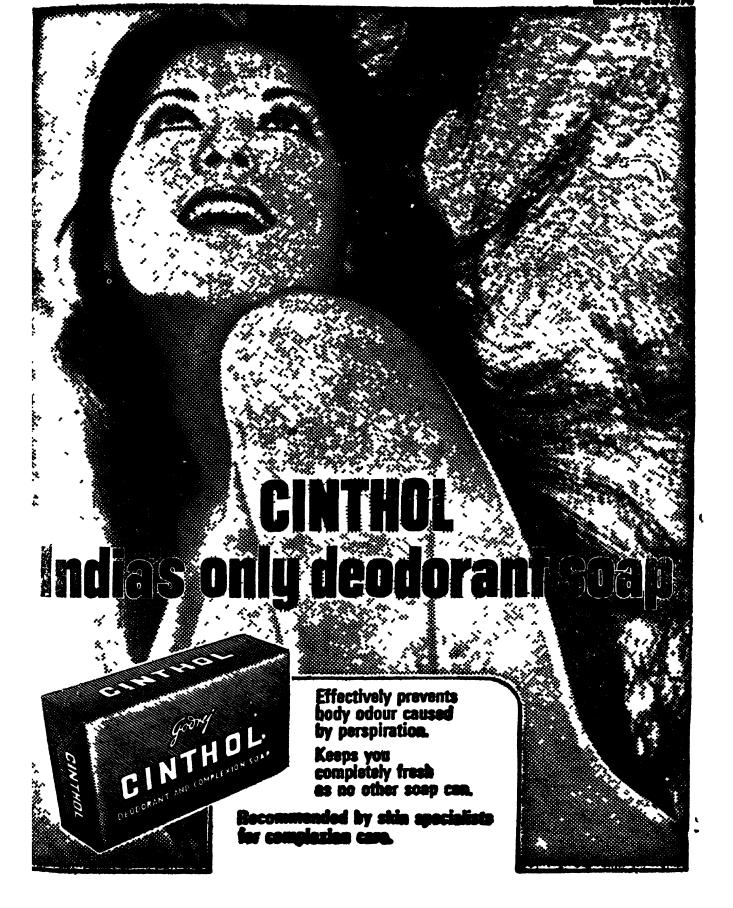
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## OPINION

ol. XIX

7th NOVEMBER 1978

No. 28

#### DO RIGHT AND SHAME THE DEVIL

THERE is a good deal of questioning about the second part of the ancient formula for good government "The personal integrity of the ruler and the moral sense of the citizenry". What some ask is this moral sense? Is it the same for everybody? What is its exact connotation? Perhaps the following Tale of our Time will assist clarification.

To X, a reputed expert in his line, there came one evening the titular head of the organisation that employed him. X expressed his gratification at this visit, and made the visitor Y welcome. After some conversation on general matters Y said, "I think you've been asked to advise on this matter. Now, a friend of mine is very interested in it, and I'd like to bring out one or two points in regard to it." X was astonished at this dignitary's interest in what seemed to him a fairly clear case, but listened politely, and when he'd finished, made some non-committal noises. "Oh," said Y, "I was forgetting. Since this is the festival season, here's something to sweeten the occasion," and he brought out from his pocket as open envelope, which displayed hundred-rupee notes and put it on the table. "The most unlikely things happen sometimes, don't they? Here am I acting as the goddess Laxmi's messenger, ha, ha." As X sat dumb, Y continued "You know it's very unlucky not to welcome any gift from Laxmi, and especially so if it comes in the evening. So don't hesitate, take the ten thousand here and consider it a prize won in a lottery." X, by now having grasped the situation, simply shook his head and pointing to the envelope said, "Please put it back in your pocket. I never expected that a man in your position would act in such a way. To tell you the truth, your behaviour fills me with disgust. Good-night, sir." "Ah well" said Y. "I see now why you are not even reasonably welloff. As you will, but remember Laxmi's wrath at the rejection of her messenger." And slipping the envelope back into his pocket, he left. X sat there indignant for quite some time, then took his usual pre-dinner drink, and had regained sufficient equanimity to smile at the whole incident by the time dinner was ready.

Now why did X act as he did? He could have been ten thousand rupees the richer and no one else the wiser had he just nodded and said thank you, but he did not. The strong moral sense of the citizen stood in the way. Gentle reader, do you approve? Can you lay your hand on your heart and say in similar circumstances you would have done the same. If you can, you too are blessed with a strong moral sense.

This tale dealt with money. Here is another in which no question

of a monetary inducement arises. A personal servant goes to his employer, accompanied by his son who has passed an examination which enables him to go in for higher studies. If the employer will sign a certificate that the servant gets half the wages he actually does, the son will get various benefits from the state, making his education almost free. Both father and son are astounded when the employer says he will not sign the certificate, i.e., make a false statement. Would it do him any harm? No. It would do them a world of good, says the father, and he has worked for him for over ten years; surely he will not be so inconsiderate as not to stretch a point in his favour. No amount of explanation of the policy of the state in allowing concessions upto a particular limit of income, of the injustice to others, if the places are filled in by people with false declarations, conveys anything to father or son. All they see is that they are being refused a very small favour, and when finally finding the employer adamant, they depart, the employer knows he will have a very disgruntled servant in future and may well lose him at the first opportunity.

Why does the employer behave as he does? Because he has a strong moral sense. If, in such circumstances and under such pressures, you would behave similarly, you too have a strong moral sense. If not, and you'd say "Anyhow a trivial matter" and sign readily, don't blink the fact that you're being a bad citizen and are undermining the moral sense of the citizenry.

These are stray instances, of no very great importance in themselves, but they serve to illustrate the issue. If seventy-five per cent of our citizens are likely to act as X and the employer did, we have reason to congratulate ourselves on the prevalence of the moral sense in this country. If fifty per cent, we might still find no reason for serious discontent. If ten per cent or less, as many estimate, then indeed the moral sense of the citizenry has reached its nadir. And yet, one cannot be sure. A situation may arise in which there will suddenly be a great resurgence of this moral sense. Witness, for instance, the tremendous defeat of Mrs. Gandhi and her followers in the General Election after the Emergency. Was this miracle anything else but a triumph of the moral sense of the citizenry?

#### **COMMENT**

H. M. Patel: Critics attribute to the term conservation an elitist connotation and the less charitable among them an ethereal unreality. Conservation has been dubbed a static concept freezing human societies at given stages of development so that the existing distinctions, economic and social, between man and man may continue. May be the countries of origin of the modern conservation movement and the strata of society to which its standard bearers belong have something to do with this criticism.

Therefore, to answer the question, "why conservation" it is necessary

to provide an answer to the question "what is conservation". Early man was so integral a part of nature that his impact on the other components of the biosphere was hardly distinguishable from the impact of animal species. However the social and cultural evolution of man has been marked by a growing conflict between him and nature. More by design than by accidest his seeming ascendency over the biotic communities of plants and animals and inanimate environment scaled greater and greater heights leading to a state of mind which comprehends man as the master of nature and someone apart from it. This feeling of euphoria or self-deception, if one may so call it, was engendered by man's small numbers over long periods of his history and the scemingly inexhaustible store house of nature. However, every step which mankind took towards progress only increased its dependence on nature. The position today is that human numbers are large and resources are limited. The life-supporting systems of the earth are threatened with irrevocable damage.

The biosphere which is a part of our planet is the grand stage on which living communities of men, plants and animals interact with each other and with their environment. How much living and non-living matter are related to each other on the biosphere has been well brought out by the Russian scientist Vernadsky. He divides the biosphere into three main components, viz., life, biogenic matter and biocosnic matter. All living matter of biosphere constitutes life Organic substance like coal, petroleum and soil humus produced by living matter constitute biogenic component. The biocosnic component is produced as a result of interaction between living matter and inorganic substances like sedimentary rocks, clay minerals, water and the atmospheric gases. interaction between the component of the biosphere is a complex process which seldom stops. Human beings, plants and animals continuously exchange matter and energy among themselves and with the environment. Thus man while admittedly a part of nature—his life and death being inextricably woven with the environmental interactions. Dasmann puts it, "Man apart from environment is an abstraction; in reality no such being could exist". . . .

In our own country effects of soil erosion arising out of poor and often improper land use practices are of no little concern. Exploitation of forests with an eye only on quick returns, agriculture in hilly areas without adequate soil conservation measures and overgrazing have all led to a situation where the life of many river valley projects have been sharply reduced. The recurrent floods and drought in some parts of the country are as much due to man-made factors as to natural causes.

Given this background the term conservation assumes a special meaning today. It is no longer understood as merely depicting nature reserves or national parks or snowy peaks and lush meadows to which only the affluent and the adventurous could repair. It has come to assume a very live meaning of profound significance to man's future. It could be defined as "the rational use of the environment to provide a high quality of living for mankind." It stresses man's wise use of his environment involving a consideration of the long-term impact of his actions. It does not preach

abnegation or inaction. Conservation is very much a dynamic concept.

Such being the content of conservation, it is obvious that the need for action is urgent. To formulate a sound workable plan of action and then to take steps to give effect to it, that becomes the first requisite. There must be a clearly enunciated policy expressing commitment to the cause of conservation. Disparate, piecemeal and ad hoc approaches without an overall policy framework would even in the short run cause more harm than good to the cause of conservation. Happily one finds the concern for conservation reflected in the Constitution usder Article 48(A) which states that, "The State shall endeavour to protect and improve the environment and to safeguard the forests and wildlife of the country." Under Article 51(A)(g), a duty is cast upon the citizens "To protect and improve the natural environment including forests, lakes, rivers and wildlife and to have compassion for living creatures." . . .

Student: The Chinese authorities are taking strong measures to improve the quality of industrial products, badly affected by the decline in management standards since the Cultural Revolution. A newly-released "30-Point Decision on Industry" draws attention to the seriousness of the problem. It has been openly admitted that even such large and nationally-known enterprises as the Anshan steel works and the Loyang and Changchum tractor plants are producing substandard goods.

People's Daily on 6 July 1978 published a call by the State Economic Council to nominate September as a "quality month". It noted that despite some improvements since the fall of the "gang of four" in October 1976, poor quality remained a serious problem. It recommended holding exhibitions of products of varying standards, both Chinese and foreign, to illustrate the differences in quality and to set targets.

Agricultural machinery and metallurgy are two of the key sectors most affected by poor quality. Canton Radio quoted the case of the Canton Tractor Plant which since 1966 has not produced a single tractor which met the required standard. . . .

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#### THE LIE TRIUMPHANT

I NDIA'S best-known and most formidable liar is back in Parliament Lesser liars rejoice mightily. "The young lambs bound. As to the tabor's sound." Older rams and ewes gaze at each other with an expectant yet confident surmise The lean days, they feel, are about to be over. They need not reminisce much longer about the lush meadows she led them into in the past. Fresh woods and pastures new she has no doubt in view and soon they will be grazing their fill on the choicest this land, and even others, can produce. No wonder they hail her over and over again as the leader of the nation, the sole and only one.

The Prime Minister and the Chairman of his Party are either whistling in the dark to reassure themselves or do not see what is in front of their noses, when they say Indira's election makes no difference to national politics. Alas, it would seen they do not know this lethal lady yet! Their complacency in regard to her in the immediate past has cost the country dear. This same complacency continued in the immediate future may lead to even direr consequences, a return to dictatorship within twenty-four to thirty-six months, shall we say? "What is, will continue" may perhaps in ordinary times, be sound, but surely not in times when an Indira is around, free, an M.P., the leader of the principal opposition party, and with unbounded resources at her disposal the sources of which still remain undiscovered. (She says she does not want to be the party's official leader in the Lok Sabha, which means just at present it is not quite convenient for her. When in a month or so, it is, there will be no hesitation on her side. What can she do, poor harassed woman, the Party insists, and reluctantly, she must yield, she will say.) Already, one of her principal lieutenants is talking about members crossing the floor.

Neither the P. M. nor the Chairman, high as their opinion of themselves is, would in view of the present state of the Janata Party, lay claim to talent for party management, party organisation or preserving unity in the party. In fact, the Janata is far from being the homogenous body of opinion a political party ought to be. It is a combination of disparate elements holding together, because if they do not, each would fare worse. Anything seriously touching the interest or thinking of any section causes it to rear up and disagree. Charan Singh and Raj Narain, the Akalis and their nominees Barnala and Gulshan, the Jan Sangh re. the RSS involvement or non-involvement in the Aligarh troubles, Madhu Limaye over the Kanti business, are cases in point. Morarji, even at his most

complacent, nay optimistic, can scarcely sing "Ours is a nice house, ours is", nor Chandrasekhar come in with the chorus "Peace and harmony prevail always, well almost always."

Into this troubled body of water steps the winner of Chickmaglur, that most unscrupulous, most ruthless, most dangerous, most plausible queen stork, adept at making the worse appear the better reason, at selling wheat and supplying barley. Is there any doubt that she will be able steadily to pick up a few members every few days until her minority party swells in numbers? The Congress (O) or (S) she already has in her handbag, as the very ambivolent resolution its Parliamentary Committee passed during the election, showed. Even the most vociferous of its members against her e.g., Chavan, did not oppose the resolution or take a stand. The Janata discontented she will carefully wheedle. On one issue or another where they differ from their party, she will be in complete sympathy with them, and let them see how much closer they are to her than to their own cold and rigid leaders. Already, Jagjivan Ram, who spoke most powerfully against her during his election tour, has been so got round that he sends her a special congratulatory message on her victory. She says she need not do anything to bring down the Janata; it will fall to bits by itself. What she means is she will use every possible inducement to widen differences within the Janata and will always be on the lookout to benefit from the fissures she creates. Thus she will either build up a majority and take over the Government, or at any rate become so strong as to prevent government from being carried on and so force a coalition on the Janata. The leader of the coalition will of course be her, if not to begin with, within a few months. Seems far fetched, does it good reader? Well do not forget how very far-fetched seemed "The Shape Of Things To Come" when Opinion published it in 1970 and how it all happened in 1975.

Even Morarji and Chandrasekhar, however lenient they have been towards Indira, would probably be inclined to be against her return to power. To the ordinary decent citizen, the mere idea is anathema. No lover of his country can contemplate such a future without a shrinking of deep disgust. Can it be avoided? Yes, it can, provided Government i.e., the total machinery, from the Prime Minister to the juniormost Government law and investigative officer, act with determination and speed in regard to the cases against her and her son, see that they are conducted through the courts most skillfully and with great expedition, allowing neither lawyers' convenience, the usual procedural delays, the accused's specious pleas, the contrived absence of witnesses, etc., to hold up day-today hearings. If this can be done, she can be stymied. If not, if the Government fails in this, be prepared, Prime Minister, Law Minister and all, to live under her rule again, likely to be even more oppressive and tyrannical than in the past, since it will have gained strength from her previous experience. In this connection, one cannot help wondering what is holding up the Supreme Court's decision on the matter referred to it. The maxim justice delayed is justice denied cannot possibly be absent for even a moment from that august body's most powerful intelligence.

Says Stephen, leader of Indira's party in the Lok Sabha, the Chick-maglur election should be taken as giving the quietus to the Shah Report. The people decided against it when they elected Indira; so drop all cases against her. Strange logic, but it explains why Indira was so anxious to be in the Lok Sabha, to establish a leverage against the Government. The leadership of the Opposition, even more the swelling of her own party in the legislature are to her the baptismal fonts that will wash away all her old sins and crimes and make her new again. Will you shatter this illusion of her and her supporters, oh Government of India, or will you indulge her in it, to the great detriment of yourself and of the people of India?

#### VIEW

R. A. Gopalswami: I have been in whole-hearted agreement with you; every week, for some three decades; so I must protest against your gross unfairness to Gandhi, Jinnah and Mountbatten (Opinion, 24-10-1978). Agreed that there has been (since 1963 and more especially since 1975) a steadily thickening political gor. Even now, no sense of honour has become discernible to the politics of India, Pakistan and Bangladesh. But what makes you think that this would not have happened if all three had remained one country all along? You are flying in the face of the ele-

mentary mathematical truth that:  $0 + \frac{0}{2} + \frac{0}{2} = 0 + 0 = 0$ 

Observer: The son is back in action too. Almost imperceptibly. Sanjay was reinstated into politics in early September this year when he addressed a thousand Youth Congressmen in Lucknow. He had also arranged for someone in deep south almost simultaneously to say that Sanjay's return to the Youth Congress and to national politics was a welcome development. All these attempts are well-orchestrated and aimed at making people believe that nothing ever went wrong in this country. It is a bold strategy which has another goal. Soon the Maruti Commission's findings will be known, as also the results of cases in court. He should then be ready to wear the mantle of a wronged politician, not a mere convicted or acquitted accused.

Not all in Mrs. Gandhi's camp approve of her son's popping up. To some, the decent interval has not yet elapsed. Some others want him to have a low profile for all times. For example, the camp followers of Kamlapati Tripathi haven't liked the Lucknow show one bit. They boycotted the meeting. When asked. Mrs. Gandhi said her son was an average Indian who would do as he pleased!

Courtesy: Imprint

Vivek: The Buddha's greatness lay in rejecting all extremes. He deprecated "luxury, Iow, vulgar, common, ignoble and useless." He was

equally opposed to "self-torture, painful, ignoble and useless."

Gautama held that everyone's salvation consisted of, and depended entirely on, modification and growth of his own inner nature and that these could be brought about only by the individual's own self-control and diligence. Briefly, character was the key to salvation. All of us, including those who do not accept the Buddhist view of existence as unhappiness caused by continuous selfish craving, can well accept the emphasis on the building up of character that is, in the Buddha's teaching, the cure for the evils attendant on life, and indeed for life itself.

What Morarji often suffers from: The indifference of age for the farching consequences of its act.

For the administrator to note: "It mattered little to me that the accord obtained was external, imposed from without and perhaps temporary. I knew that good like bad becomes a routine, that the temporary tends to endure, that what is external permeates to the inside, and that the mask, given time, comes to be the face itself. Since hatred, stupidity and delirium have lasting effects, I saw no reason why goodwill, clarity of mind and just practice should not have their effects too."

"Of tides that toss the souls of men Some are foreseen and wrathered wantonly; Others burst at flood, none witting why or when, And are called Destiny."

"Let truth be presented as it is, arduous and honest and implacable."

"Be straight-tongued in harmony with God and shoulder the yoke which God has laid upon you."

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## OPINION

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21st NOVEMBER 1978

No. 30

#### THE PUBLIC VOICE

An eventful week this, wouldn't you say?" said the smart young female secretary as she took her place in the queue at the terminus behind the middle-aged, pleasant faced woman political scientist. "What with the Janata party at Ujjain and Indira in London!" "Eventful, I don't know" said the political scientist. "Did anything special happen? I hardly think so. Interesting, I will concede, with Indira carrying to London all her off-repeated lies here, with the Janata masochists flagelating themselves in public for not achieving in twenty months some of their impossible aspirations. Yes, both not very edifying aspects of our common national character, I would say."

"Come, come," said the thin-faced bespectacled economic journalist, "I wouldn't put the two exhibitions in the same class. In the one, you have the most vicious woman-politician of the age, taking advantage of the folly of her opponents in being especially lenient to her, to malign them up and down a foreign land and present herself as an unfortunate persecuted victim, and a stateswoman of great prespicacity. In the other, you have group rivalries emerging in the form of self-criticism to do down the other groups in the Government. Alas, alas, alas, we haven't kept all the promises made in our manifesto; there is still unemployment, there are still slums, there is still poverty. We have failed, yes, how sad it is, but we have failed! To which the sensible outsider would answer, Are you so bemused with your theorist thoughts of the "Total revolution" that you think you can wave a wand, hey, presto, and things will be as your heart desires. Good sirs, things don't happen that way in this ordinary world. It will be quite enough if you conduct public affairs with honesty, reasonable despatch and efficiency, complete lack of partisanship and a certain amount of responsiveness. Don't try and do everything at the same time, so that you don't fail in everything. And remember, making a fine speech and doing the things you mention in your speech are two quite different matters. The first need take only a few minutes; the second may need years of diligent effort, may run into snags, may have to be reconsidered and replanned several times, may require very different qualities for achieving success than those that distinguish the speech-maker. It often strikes me how unfortunate it is the politician has no training at all for his job. He can rarely distinguish between the half-baked and the genuine, and he generally thinks it is quite enough to shine his eyes, mount the platform and let fly.

What happens thereafter, ah well, need it concern him too much?"

"That may be, but don't forget he is essential equipment. You can't run a modern country without him. If he replaces himself by becoming a dictator, as Indira did, the result is bad government, vicious and unethical in every respect. So, educate your politicians by all manner of means, make them see things as they are and not as they imagine them to be, but remember, you can't do without them, anymore than they can do without you, the people," said a white-haired, khadi-clad, luxuriously -moustached old gentleman, leaning upon the trusty umbrella that accompanied him, be it rain or shine. 'As to the Janata, I agree they deprecate themselves much more than they need to about all kinds of matters Under them the country has liberty. A very great thing indeed. The state of the economy is reasonable, and the consumers' interest is by and large, protected, two further plus points of considerable importance. There is a continuous ferment for betterment, especially in the often-neglected rural parts, brought about largely by Janata policy. This has its own inconveniences, sometimes even ending in civil strife, but on the whole it is quite worth-while. An era of strikes and processions, moan quite a number of people, but even most of them in their more thoughtful moments admit that such an era is better than an era over shadowed by the forced peace and quiet of the grave, an era of the whispered voice and the policeman's knock, of the common man's apprehension and the judiciary's discretion. But of course the Janata has faults too and it must try to overcome them."

"I would list them thus in order of priority. First, the unwillingness or inability to discover Indira's secret hoards, and their source. She seems to have Karoon's own treasure-house at her disposal, yet it is a mystery where it is or who provides it," said the young secretary. "Second, Insistence on Prohibition, a throughly stupid policy extremely expensive to the state, a proved failure wherever it has been tried even in this country. Third, the attempt to force Hindi down the throats of the South by various indirect devices. You say oh, no, no, no, not unless you agree, and then your departments do quite the contrary. I have no doubt this feeling against the Janata as Pro-Hindi had a large part in its defeat Fourth, not sufficent attention to order and crime. The at Chikmaglur criminal seems to have less fear of the enforcement authorities than ordi-This really is a matter for the State governments rather than the Centre, but since the discredit falls also on the Centre, it should be much more vigitant about it All the communal and inter-caste disputes, confermes quite serious, come under this head. I've heard it said about an old-time commissioner that finding three riots had occured in two weeks in three different localities in a district, he just turned up at the Collector's house early one morning, having travelled all night from his own headquarters, and said to the hastily-awakened collector, My dear fellow, I'm so sorry you've been unwell. Go off to that hill-station for a month at once, I'll take charge. And before the afternoon, so it was, and there were no more riots. That, one cannot expect nowadays,

for that quality of man is very rarely to be found, if at all, among either Ministers or officials. But the Janata must remember that order is the elementary condition of civilised life, and its maintenance, a government's first duty. Fifth, the internal bickering in the party. This really does more to lower the janata image than almost anything else. The wretched fellows can't even keep together themselves, people say slightingly."

"Well", said the middle-aged political scientist, "you've made out a fairly comprehensive list. I'll add only one, the crass folly of the tendresse the Janata top leadership has had for Indira, enabling her now to become not only a serious danger to the Janata, but also to the country and its liberty. I'd put this at the head of the list. If they don't change their attitude, and still hesitate to prosecute her with speed and vigour, they've had it, I think. They'll go down the drain, and we, alas, with them." "I agree entirely with what you say," said the economic journalist. "Ah, well one can only hope wisdom will prevail. Nobody who thinks can feel very cheerful in these days, I suppose. Well, there's the bus." They all climbed in with serious faces and settled down in their seats, while the conductor engaged in an argument with a hawker, and the driver stretched his legs during the customary halt.

#### **A CORRECTIVE**

To tell the truth about Jawaharlal Nehru while lauding him to the skies as has been done this week both at home and abroad, must indeed be difficult. Here then is a piece from *Opinion* shortly after his death, which may serve to set him in proper perspective:

"Mr. Nehru was a great man, though not the amalgam of the Buddha, Socrates and Churchill eulogists since his death have made him out to be. His greatness lay in his attitudes and pronouncements rather than in his deeds and achievements. His charismatic appeal and overwhelming charm closed the eyes of almost all to the less favourable aspects of his character and capacity, while his skill in political management prevented any real pressures from developing against him. Great man as he was, and beloved far beyond the ordinary, he was an inadequate and ineffective Prime Minister. Of the problems with which the country was faced when he assumed power, none he solved; many he exacerbated; and to their number he added not a few of his own creation. judgment of men and of situations left very much to be desired. Merciful of heart and invariably well-intentioned, by doing good to the evil and extending his protection over them, he often did evil to the good. Successful and skilled practitioner of the word, to the word he attached such importance that often in his mind it came to replace the deed, to render redundant both the steps necessary to bring about the deed and the result that was the deed. Truly liberal and with an abiding faith in democracy and democratic values, he initiated and carried out policies which

strengthened greatly the country of democracy both within and without the country. To all men, he was particularly tender to the crypto communists he had known for long and he permitted them to infiltrate his own democratic Congress organisation, thus doing its true character grave damage.

Withal he was a loveable man. Grace and courtesy were his natural elements. The country is a poorer, a less civilised place without him." (2.6.64)

(N.B.: He may, in a way, be said to be the founder of Opinion, for despite his attachment to democratic values, including the freedom of the press, he caused to be eliminated, at different times quietly and without any fuss, this writer's weekly column from three large circulation daily papers; and so finally arose Opinion. Perhaps it may not even be out of place for the Editor smilingly to pay him tribute the

Bless and praise we famous men, Men of little showing, For their work continueth, And their work continueth, Greater than their knowing.)

"Oh eloquent, just and mighty Death! Whom none could advise, thou hast persuaded; what none hath dared, thou hast done; and whom all the world hath flattered, thou only hath cast out of the world and despised Thou hast drawn together all the far-stretched greatness, all the pride, cruelty and ambition of man, and covered it all over with these two narrow words—Hic Jacet."

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

18th JULY 1978

No. 12

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#### THE DERVISH AT NIGHT

EEPLY sighed the dervish Al Varogh as the last colours faded from the sky at the end of the day. His long stint at the caveentrance left him physically tired out, but to that he had of late become accustomed. After all four score years were behind him, and the last ten especially had brought to him daily, almost imperceptibly, a realisation of his vulnerability in this regard. He, who, during the longer part of his life had stood straight as the cypress, meeting all men's gaze with a steady look, had for some time now had his shoulders bowed, his eves fixed on the ground, compelled by nature to observe a strange humility, to make up to some extent perhaps, for the self-assurance, what some termed, the arrogance, that had sustained him throughout life. To this present condition, he had become resigned, though he still strove from time to time to make his bones behave otherwise, until ruefully and painfully he realised on each occasion the long victory was with them. In any case, the sufferings of the body had never been central to his life, nor indeed the body itself. But today, towards the evening, he had become aware of another phenomenon. He was very, very tired in the mind. Just one more conscious thought, one more logical inference from a given set of facts, appeared impossible. The mind seemed to long for emptiness, for absence of any effort, however little And this it struck him was a truly serious matter.

Spreading out the sleeping-mat a little inside the cave, he drew himself up to his full height and spoke: "Not thus, Almighty Lord, not thus, as a mere vegetable, let my end be. Thy executioner's axe fall on mind and body together, and be its blow short, sharp, definitive, are thy servants' prayers!" As he lay down, the thought came to him: "There I go again, telling the Lord what to do about myself! No wonder my shoulders are bent and my head bowed." And smiling to himself, "Ah, but He understands how it was meant; He will take no offence," and closing his eyes, was fast asleep on the instant.

Three hours later, the dervish awoke as suddenly and peacefully as he had fallen asleep, and making his way a little outside the cave, sat down on a small raised platform to enjoy the starlight. Many years had passed since the last occasion on which hal (the state of ecstasy) had been vouchsafed to him, and he wondered whether this unexpected waking (ordinarily nowadays he slept without dream or disturbance from sunset to sunrise) was the prelude to that greatly-longed-for condition. He sat

In Trust For The People... The entire wealth gethered by the Founder of Teta Enterprises, and his sons and successors, ever almost a century of industrial pioneering is bequeathed to Tata philanthropic trusts and foundations.

The whole of that wealth is held in trust for the people and used exclusively for their benefit—scholarships for education, grants for rural welfare, contributions for medical research, support for national institutions, and donations for relief from natural disasters.

The circle is thus complete: what came from the people goes back to the people many times over:



there, therefore, quiet and receptive, only too soon to realise that it was not to be. The world, the actual, physical world of human beings with its problems and perplexities he found to be too much with him, and so he allowed himself to be immersed in it. "Complacency, complacency," he murmured, "is there anything else that has destroyed human felicity more than this deleterious quality? And it is not even generally recognised as harmful. The parent who warns his or her children against it is rare indeed, and so it is to be found in every sphere of life, doing most harm in the highest. Two people, who came from my favourite country, furnished an apt example. I call it my favourite country because in it in theory the people rule it, and in practice to a very large extent, they The people actually count! Now, that country, according to these advice-seekers, has got through a very bad patch. For the rule of the people was substituted the rule of a truly dictatorial Prime Minister, a most oppressive, often completely authoritarian, upscrupulous, ruthless ruler! By the Grace of God, after 19 months it ended, the dictator hoping to legitimise her hold on power by elections which she thought she would most certainly win, but by a miracle, the Grace of God having enlightened the people, lost.

"What would you suppose would be the first reaction of the new authorities to the situation? Great caution about the old dictator, prompt punishment to her and her bound supporters, complete watchfulness about them. But my informants tell me that such great complacency has prevailed in the new Government, Legislature and Ruling Party that the dictator has regained a great deal of ground, is a powerful factor in politics again, and is well on the way to being a credible challenger. The top-people in Government seem to see no danger from her at all to the country or themselves. Such is their complacency. Are they mad? I asked. Those whom the gods wish to destroy they first drive mad is a proverb of your own country. In the conduct of your government, your legislature, your ruling party in other matters, is there also evidence of madness? No, they said, none particularly marked, but in this, complacency rules, only complacency. They all are bewitched. We are greatly distressed, for we see the future opening out dark, darker, utterly black, before us, and these leaders chop, not even logic, but spurious argument and sham legalism, and tell us to be Hap, Happy, for 'Tis a Happy day for all, because above all it is a Happy day for Indira, (the ex-director now planning to be dictator again). To their frenzied requests for advice, and their reluctance to believe in the effectiveness of an appeal to the legislators and the ordinary party members against the government and its top leadership, I could give no answer except the general one. Against witchcraft, genuinely believed in, the only civilised answer is prayer. Pray then mightily, pray by night and by day, pray singly and in congregation, that this blight of complacency be lifted from the governors and the people, that the machinations of the witch be frustrated. Not a very satisfactory answer, but the best in the circumstances. And teach your children from infancy onwards to watch out against complacency."

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4



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The dervish rose from the platform and began walking round in a circle, intoning in a low voice, some verses, some prayers, his voice stopping from time to time, but his walk continuing, the circle becoming wider but more perfect, his speed rising almost to a run, until suddenly he halted, his face all exalted, called out loudly I Behold, I Behold, and fell down flat upon the ground. Next morning, when the first advice-seekers of the day came up the narrow hill-path. they found him lying there. At their noise he rose. Bowing to them he said, "sing with me" and plunged into a song of thanksgiving to God he had written twenty-five years ago, now a classic throughout the countryside. Whatever the experiences of the night, the day had its duties and within half-an-hour, bathed under the open-air rock-spring, freshened and breakfasted, the dervish was at his post at the cave-entrance, listening to tales of tragic and other happening, politics, war and statecraft, greed and cupidity, virtue and rascality, of all that makes up the ordinary stuff of life, wondering often at the mercy of God and the stupidity of men and women, cheered now and again by the spark of quality that glittered for a moment or two.

#### A LANDSCAPE OF DISASTER

#### NERGIS DALAL

LARMING depletion of forest area in Dehra Dun," reads a news item in the payer today. And we, who look out on the hills leading up to Mussoorie—hills once green and furred with trees, see only ugly gashes where the limeston has been torn out and the hills made bare and denuded for ever, of life-giving trees.

As a nation, our most distinguished characteristic must surely be the ability to talk, talk, without ever accomplishing anything. Preserve wild life, we cry, save the tiger; stop bonded labour, provide jobs for everyone. Committees are formed, reams and reams of paper used up recommending this or that action to be taken, and eventually nothing is done.

Right in front of my window were two beautiful goldmohur trees in full bloom, all the light concentrated in the glowing petals, the delicate green leaves, shimmering in the wind. But they were doomed. An officer of the geological survey had bought the plot and planned to put up shops in the area. For once everyone in the neighbourhood was united. For once we really did something, writing letters to all the authorities concerned, making representations to the District Magistrate, the Forest people, the Chairman of the City Board. No one replied. No one took the slightest interest. The trees could have been saved if the buildings were pushed back by about four feet. Not too difficult it seemed. But no authority came forward to ban the erection of the buildings and the





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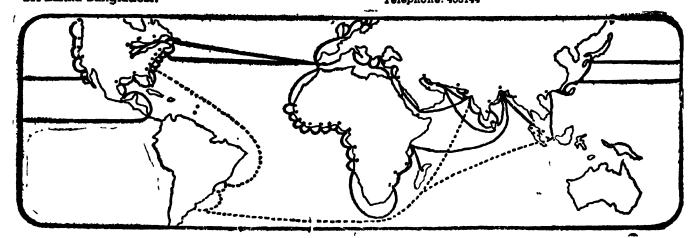
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trees were murdered—the scarlet flowers, the lacy green leaves, shrivelled and withered in the dust. No longer can we look out on a dazzle of butter-flies in the branches—no birds shelter from the sun in the thick green shade of the trees. The beautiful trees were gone for ever.

One hundred thousand trees are planted each year out of which sixty thousand die! Lack of water, they say, and the depredation of goats, children, people. Some are planted under high-tension wires and have to be lopped off, some are too close together and need thinning. On the hills the planting is subject to indiscriminate cutting by the local people in addition to organised felling by contract. The future is committed to a landscape of disaster unless something constructive is done.

What we need is not mechanical planting of so many thousands of trees in order to reach the required target for the year. What we need is careful and loving planting of trees by men who can see into the future and visualise the land green and cool with forests and the earth rich and dark with loam, where the trees will form natural barriers to drought and floods and give shelter to the beautiful wild creatures now so terribly endangered. Is this too much to expect?

#### INDIA'S POLICY TOWARDS ISRAEL

#### SHEILA SUMANT

I T is heartening to find at least one Janata M.P.—Shri H. V. Kamath—to speak the truth and attack the Janata Government for following the same old moronic policy of the father and his daughter towards Israel.

With the change of government, our people expected a genuine non-aligned foreign policy in regard to Arab-Israel dispute since the two major constituents of the Janata Party—the Jan Sangh party and the Socialist party—were the most vehement critics of our policy towards Israel.

Whenever Shri Vajpayee, our present Foreign Minister, is asked how he could reconcile his erstwhile foreign policy as a Jan Sangh leader with his present foreign policy, his stock reply is that he is not in the opposition now! So he criticised the Congress foreign policy simply because he was in the opposition! Opposition for the sake of opposition! He does not, however, admit that his earlier views on Israel were wrong. All that he says is that he is now the foreign minister of the Janata Government and not of the Jan Sangh Government! It amounts to the amoral stance of a lawyer defending his client or of a salesman changing his firm with no other thought than of improving his prospects. In other words, he meekly and blindly subscribes to the views of the party to which he belongs on the day he expresses his views!

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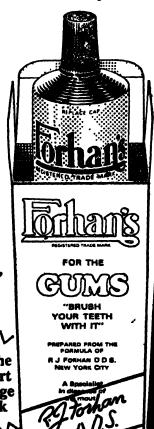
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In the whole of West Asia, Israel is the only country which is both democratic and socialist, and yet our Government has not found it fit to have full diplomatic relations with Israel. We are supposed to be strongly opposed to communalism, feudalism, and other 'isms' of reaction and yet we seek to appease and placate reactionary, feudal and obscurantist, Arab states.

One of the new arguments advanced by the Janata Government for not having full diplomatic relations with Israel is that Israel is occupying the Arab territories. Such a ridiculous argument was not expected from a person like Shri Vajpayee. Are we not having full diplomatic relations with both China and Pakistan which continue to occupy large areas of our own territory?

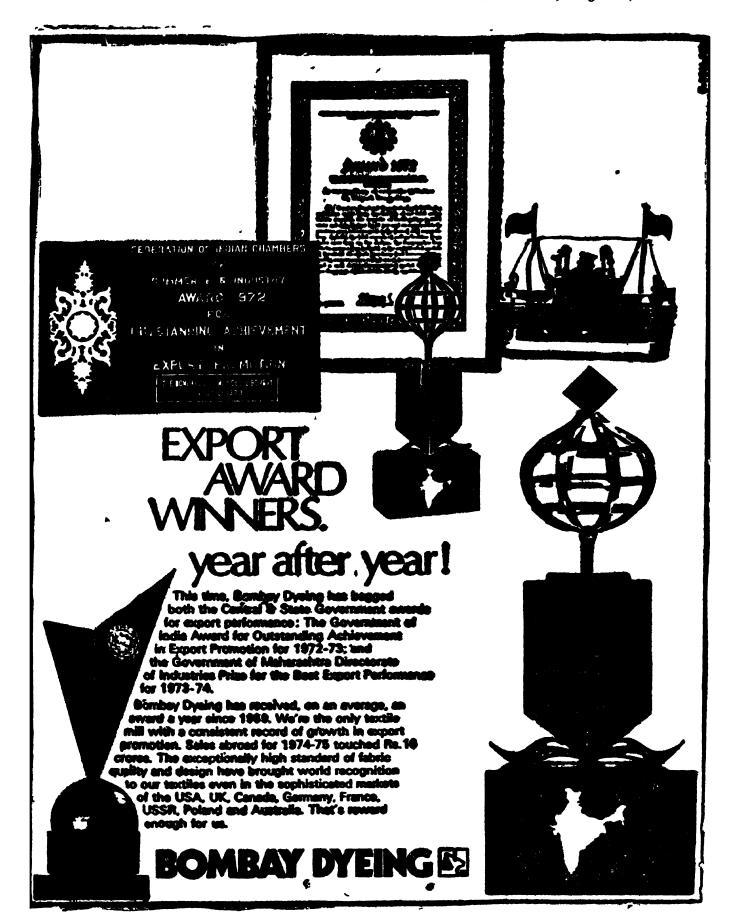
Another argument advanced is that we may jeopardise our relations with Arab countries in our dispute with Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir. This argument is most fallacious, since the Arab countries have cordial relations with many African countries, Iran, Turkey, Nepal, Burma, etc., which have friendly and full diplomatic relations with Israel as well as with Arab countries.

Furthermore, while the Arab countries have consistently supported Pakistan on the issue of Kashmir, Israel has consistently supported us on this issue! None of the Arab countries supported us when China committed aggression against India, but Israel did! Further, take the case of Chinese aggression against India. The non-aligned countries remained non-aligned even when one of their own members was attacked! Did we remain non-aligned when U A.R. was attacked by the U.K., France and Israel?

It is hard to understand how one country can dictate to another which countries it shall have full diplomatic relations with. Are we to formulate our foreign policy on the basis of truth, justice and established facts, or on the basis of the likes and dislikes, smiles or frowns of so-called friendly countries which betrayed us when we become the victims of Chinese and Pakistani aggression? Is it even proper for one country to make its friendship with another country conditional on the latter's being inimical to a third country?

Our "genuinely non-aligned" foreign policy ceases to be so the moment we become partisan in any dispute between the countries. In other words, unless all countries in the world recognise us as and allow us to be a truly non-aligned country, we have no right to claim to be genuinely non-aligned in our foreign policy. We should either be a neutral country like Switzerland or follow an independent foreign policy, based on truth and justice and consistent with our domestic policy, the basic features of which are parliamentary democracy, independent judiciary, free press and freedom of thought and speech.

While the five constituents of the Janata Party have failed to integrate into one united party even after one year, Israel has successfully





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#### THE SNAIL

Leaving the safety of a rocky ledge The snail sets out On his long journey Across a busy path The grass is greener on the other side! For tender leaf or juicy stem He'll brave the hazards of the road. Not made to dodge or weave or run, He must awart each threatening step Chancing his luck, Keeping his tentacles crossed— All unaware Of the dangers of being squashed He does not pause or flinch-A cart-wheel misses by an inch!-But slithers on, Intent on dinner He's there at last—his prize: Rich leaf-mould where the grass grows tall.

I salute you, Snail!
Somehow, you've made me feel quite small.

-Ruskin Bond

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## OPINION

Vol. XIX

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No. 20

#### **COMMENT**

F. S. Nariman: Then came the Emergency of June, 1975 and the stringent censorship laws. The Ark of the Covenant struck a rock and sank—all hands aboard. With a few notable exceptions the air was one of frightened conformity—the media (with of course notable exceptions) conformed to the dictates of Government.

With the lifting of the Emergency, there was a great deal of soul-searching and some heart-beating. Why was the press so supine?—that was the recurrent theme. "They asked you to bend," one Minister told them—"but you crawled!"

If the gentlemen of the press and of the media lacked courage it was not because of any special deficiency peculiar to them—it was because we as citizens lacked courage. It was the climate of the times—it was like the malarial bug which afflicts the nigh and mighty as much as the lowly

You remember the story which Khrushchev tells. At the historic session of the Supreme Soviet, he denounced the misdeeds of Marshal Stalin trenchantly and repeatedly—the thousand-member delegation heard him in silence. Then a voice a small voice piped up from the audience—"What were you doing, Comrade Khrushchev when Stalin was alive?" The cherubic Russian leader looked up from his script and said, "Will the Comrade who said this, please stand up". There was no answer. He repeated: "Will the Comrade, who said this, please stand up". Still no answer. And then he broke into a smile "Now you know what I was doing when Stalin was alive".

Since the media has won back its freedom, there has been a great deal of discussion on its "responsibility".

But it is well to remember that what the Constitution guarantees is a free press—not necessarily a fair, honest or a good one. The constitutional concept of a free press is reasonably clear but the concept of a responsible press remains vague and cloudy.

Responsibility suggests standards—and there is always the danger of its becoming a euphemism for respectability. Responsible conduct is conduct considered becoming by the majority—by those in power.

People in power do not cherish the prospect of what Americans used to call "muck-raking"—now grandioloquently known as "investigative reporting". It is for this reason that the present Chief Justice of the United States wrote in a celebrated opinion—"A responsible press, he said, is undoubtedly a desirable goal but press responsibility is not mandated

by the Constitution and like many other virtues, it cannot be legislated." In 1948, a year before Professor Harold Laski died, Pandit Nehru (who was his student) said to him that he had a confession to make—"In the fifteen years since I lett you my political ideas have become the exact opposite of all you taught me". Laski's answer was significant:

"I taught you no ideas What I taught you was to think for yourself. If your own experiences, in the School of Life have caused you through your own independent thinking to come to conclusions different from my own, I am happy. For I have succeeded in my end. I have taught you how to think."

Laski's answer provides an aspiration worthy of every individual and responsible media-man: I have taught the people how to think.

Chief Seathl of the Suwamish tribe of the State of Washington to President Franklin Pierce of the United States in 1855: . . . How can you buy or sell the sky—the warmth of the land? The idea is strange to us. We do not own the freshness of the air or the sparkle of the water. How can you buy them from us? We will decide in our time Every part of this earth is sacred to my people. Every shining pine needle, every sandy shore, every mist in the dark woods, every humming insect is holy in the memory and experience of my people. . . .

There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the leaves of spring or the rustle of insect wings. But perhaps because I am a savage and do not understand—the clatter only seems to insult the ears. And what is there to life if a man cannot hear the lovely cry of the whipporwill or the arguments of the frogs around a pond at night? The Indian prefers the soft sound of the wind darting over the face of the pond, and the smell of the wind itself cleansed by a mid-day rain, or scented with a pine. The air is precious to the redman, for all things share the same breath—the beasts, the trees, the man. The white man does not seem to notice the air he breathes. Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the smell.

If I decide to accept your offer, I will make one condition. The white man must treat the beasts of this land as his brothers. I am a savage and I do not understand any otherway. I have seen a thousand rotting buffaloes on the prairie, left by the white man who shot them from a passing train. I am a savage and do not understand how the smoking iron horse can be more important than the buffalo that we kill only to stay alive. What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beasts also happens to the man. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth. . . .

One thing we know which the white man may one day discover. Our God is the same God. You may think now that you own Him as you wish to own our land. But you cannot. He is the God of men. This earth is precious to Him. And to harm the earth is to heap contempt on its Creator. The whites, too shall pass—perhaps sooner than other

tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, the sacred corner of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. And what is it to say goodbye to the swift and the hunt—the end of living and the beginning of dying. . . .

V. Kurien: Many professionals suffer because of the urban orientation of their education and their social experience. Many even fear that to turn to the countryside would be a backward step for them. Fear is a powerful dilutant of commitment.

And commitment is required, if one is to work for farmers. Villages are not idyllic havens. Poverty and repression do not always bring out the natural nobility of man. Many of our villages have narrowing societies; they are dominated by a set of elders who have little claim to positions of leadership, except the dubious qualification of age.

No wonder young people flee from the villages. They know that the streets of Ahmedabad are not paved with gold. Not for them, at least. It is what they are leaving—not what they are coming to—that drives them to the city.

In this sense, the parasitical nature of our urbanisation is supported by the narrowness of village society, by the repression of the village gerontocracy. But these are the very reasons why, for the next generation, both our rural and our urban societies must change. The flight from the villages must be staunched—and the destructiveness of our urbanisation must be reversed—if the process of modernisation is to have any socio-economic meaning for the next generation. But whether this can be achieved depends, to a great extent, on whether the professionals resolve the conflict in their own stance on urban-rural relations.

Problems arising out of our present urban-rural relationships must be the business of professionals. Solving these problems calls for management of technological and socio-economic change. And, looking at these problems, one can see the main elements in the professional's role in solving them.

There is, of course, the conventional ethic of honesty and diligence. It is the necessary condition for success in all roles (but perhaps the professional has the greatest need for it to be in-built within him, because he has to discipline himself).

In addition, the professional has five tasks, if he is to play his role in the management of change:

First and foremost, the professional has to be true to his "science" and committed to the unending pursuit of a mastery of his subject: that is the ethic of the professional.

The professional has in his hands the instruments of change, the essential tools which society has to command, if it is to achieve the change which it requires. The professional, even though he com-

of the society at large . . Managing on behalf of others: that we can call the professional focus.

The professional has to perceive—and even anticipate—the needs and aspirations of his constituency, gathering their diverse threads together and resolving any conflicts in them. The professional accepts the needs and aspirations of his constituency as the spur which drives him on, continuously seeking to improve his own performance. . . . An internalised vision of our constituency's world, which lies outside ourselves: that we can call the motivation of the professional.

The professional has to be aware of the bureaucracy that he and his colleagues are for ever building, allegedly to serve others, but always with the tendency to be self-serving. When he finds that he has erected his own bureaucracy, he has to tear it down and reform it. Rejecting the old and exposing himself to what is new: that we can call the revolutionary role of the professional.

Lastly, and in summary, the professional has to keep in his mind the difference between what he wants the world to be and what the world is, remembering that large endeavours are only the sum of many small parts. He deals with a kaleidoscope of policies, administrative practices, work cultures, techniques and technologies. Through this kaleidoscope, the professional has to keep clear in his mind his perception of the social and economic impacts of the technologies which he commands. Only then can he give purpose to the majority's awareness of what constitutes desirable change. . . . A perception of the real world which is neither romantic nor pessimistic: this we can call the clarity of mind which is the basis of professionalism.

These are five characteristics of the professional's role in management of change: the ethic of mastering one's subject, a focus on other's needs, an internationalisation of the exterior world one serves, constructive iconoclasm toward one's bureaucracy—and clarity of mind about the many seemingly small elements which make up great endeavours.

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

3rd OCTOBER 1978

No. 23

#### THE PUBLIC VOICE

F small is beautiful, then is big ugly?" asked of herself an attractive young woman of about twenty-five, as she strolled pensively down a pathway in a rather unfrequented corner of the park one evening, at about 6.30. "No, I don't think so, in fact I know it isn't so, but what do you say?" and she stopped and turned to a pleasant-faced, middle-aged lady who was some steps behind her. Startled the lady asked "Say to what?" "Why, I was talking aloud, I thought you heard. My question was, if small is beautiful, is big ugly? What is your view?" "Well, I didn't come out this evening to enter into philosophical disquisitions. However, since you ask, the poet says

It is not growing like a tree in bulk

Does make man better be A lily of a day

Is fairer far in May. It is the fruit and flower

Of light. In small proportions

We just beauties see, and is short measures

Life may perfect be.

The last proposition I can support from personal experience. On the rest your view is as good as mine. But if you will explain, particularise, we might do better. Ah, good evening, perhaps you too will help us" and she nodded cordially to a thin-faced, bespectacled man of about forty-five with a book under his arm, who was making his way to a nearby empty bench.

"Yes", said the young woman, "I don't know either of you, and you don't know me. So let's sit down and talk. I'll tell you my problem and you give me your opinions. I am twenty-six, have a good job with reasonable prospects, no family, a fairly equable temperament and should be quite happy, were it not for a rather old-fashioned belief that a young woman unmarried at my age is a young woman marred. I have quite a number of admirers. As you see, I am rather personable. Of the lot, am quite fond of two, one a lawyer in reasonable practice, a couple of years older than me, who is just 4 feet 11 inches, and the other, an executive in a good firm, four years older than me, who is 6 feet 2 inches. Now if one of them wasn't there, I'd marry the other like a shot. They're both good-natured, humurous, make me laugh and are quite reliable. I know I'm very fortunate to have two such men wanting me, but I can't marry both. I have to choose, so which, which, which? Don't tell me

neither. I've said to myself more than once, wait, somebody will come, about whom you'll be quite certain. But I know there's no somebody coming, and both of them make my heart flutter. Now tell me."

"Well you know the old maxim, all the too tall are fools and all the too short rogues. Perhaps that would apply" suggested the thin-faced man. "Oh, nonsense" said the young woman, "I know these two very well. Neither is either a fool or a rogue." And she looked rather aggressively at the man. "I agree" said the lady "it would be a pity to wait and you must make up your mind, even if in the end you have to toss a coin to decide. Only once the decision is made, put the other out of your consideration altogether. Don't keep on thinking at some moment or the other, Oh, if only, etc. etc. I should think you're tough enough to be able to do that. Now, that we've applied our minds to your very important problem, perhaps you will give us leave to think of other things." "Oh yes, yes, I must go in any case, good bye and thanks" said the young woman as she hurried off.

"Which reminds me" said the middle-aged lady. "Many ministers of this Government seem to be quite convinced that big is ugly, whether small be beautiful or not. All this talk of nationalisation and breaking-up of big concerns and so on. What do they really mean?" "I don't suppose they know themselves. Some are the slaves of their election manifesto, some of some semi-defunct economist they read or glanced at in their college days. To talk of nationalisation of this, that and the other and at the same time to ask for the stepping-up of investment by the public in industry, could there be greater nonsense? The industry into which you put your money I am taking over, but go on, keep puting your money into industry for me to take over later, say these ministers in effect. So what do you do? Well, if you're wise, you don't of course, unless there's a likelihood of very large short-term profits. Then you go in, make your killing and get out in the shortest period possible," said the thin-faced man.

"I know, of course" said the middle-aged lady "that a good deal of the Big in Big Business stinks but that is no reason for branding the whole of it as ugly." "Well" answered the economic journalist "if that stinking Big is eighty per cent of the whole, you can scarcely blame the ordinary man for not having a good image of the whole. The Big in each case ought to be examined from the point of view of how it became big, how it behaves now that it is big. Where it is clear that there has been, or is, chicanery and rascality, however sophisticated, it should be attacked most rigorously. Where it is clear there is no such thing, there should be no bureaucratic interference. We have had cases in which commissions reported against certain firms but they go on merrily, and others in which commissions are held up for years on legal grounds and the firms continue as before. What is worse is that the people in charge of such firms continue to supply funds to our political parties, which will not adopt any other simple, straight-forward method of getting election funds in small

sums from a large number of willing members. So, exasperatedly, the politicians talk generally of nationalisation, breaking-up of the big. everything being different, while in reality everything remains the same owing to their own crassness. You continue to sow the same seed and expect different fruit. Well miracles are always possible. By now it should be clear to anybody who observes and thinks that nationalisation rarely leads to real improvement. Often what is everybody's business becomes nobody's business. Slackness, mismanagement grow and the end-result is unsatisfactory. In some cases, where for instance, such large capital investment is needed as cannot be made except by Government, nationalisation cannot be avoided. But generally, to combine political and economic power so intimately, is to ask for and get trouble. You know, a nationalised industry often has the worst characteristics of both parents, of government and of business, and once it's there, to do anything to eradicate them becomes so difficult, involves so much trouble, that hardly ever does any one bother. Good-bye, dear lady, I must be going." And they both walked to the gate of the park and went their different ways.

#### **OLD WINE**

#### Gauri Deshpande

For verse, one feels, there is an age. Unready wine still fermenting Giving off the sour fragrance Of hastily bubbling experience That pours forth facilely, pushing to the surface Lovers tears loneliness fulfilment Grist to the mill of "sighs and thighs" they say. That age provides its own yeast The words that come easy, given to you at birth. But then you feel, there's a limit; how much can you moan Over a sagging breast and lack of lovers? You settle down in a dark quiet Corner "away from vibrations" You brood upon the routine of days, their sameness Blurring whole months and years Even children grow Imperceptibly along a wide plateau. You feel no inclination to stir The events of the world Are not so cataclysmic as to require Attention You have not enough dreary Self pity

To set forth personal Or ancestral trivialities Nor enough complacence to engage In the social consciousness game. For the rest verse seems inadequate. Its terms impotent to dilate On the minuscule change Year by year. Indignation and sorrow Want and eleemosyny Cynisism and expectation Distaste and desire ..... All seem pretty evenly measured And you wonder: When I am decanted At last, will I be vinegar Or old wine?

"I hate all bungling as I do sin, but particularly bungling in politics, which leads to the misery and ruin of thousand, and millions of people."

"The office of poetry is not to make us think accurately, but feel truly."

"You will find poetry nowhere, unless you bring some with you."

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

19th SEPTEMBER 1978

No. 21

### COME ON, SELF

(These Gujarati verses of Vipin Parikh, rendered into English by Gajendra Thakore, are an apt commentary on our times; times in which Indira, the ex-Chief Cashier of the Nagarwala matter Malhotra's "Mataji", enjoys undisturbed her enormous hidden hordes, and is, despite the clear adverse findings of the Shah Commission, received in a forty-five-minute audience by the President; times in which the Prime Minister's son Kantibhai, who lives with him, as a private individual we are told—mark you particularly, a thoroughly private individual—collects eighty lakhs for elections; times in which a reputedly responsible, large circulation daily newspaper recommends corruption as a powerful preserver of democracy!)

A tree may forsooth say "Give me my cha-pani,
(You know what!)
Before I cast my shade for you."

A cuckoo may insist
"Do give me a nest
In a posh locale
(Green twigs and branches too)
Before I coo for you."

It would not surprise me
In the least
If the river decided to overflow
At the opposite bank only
On due consideration!

Come on, Self,

Let us go to a country where We do not have to bribe the Sun God For his daily shower of silver rays.

### BANYAN TREE

I remember you well, old banyan tree, As you stood there, spreading quietly Over the broken wall.

While adults slept, I crept away
Down the broad verandah steps, around
The outhouse and the melon-ground
Into the shades of afternoon. . . .

Those summers in India no one stirred Till evening brought the Fever-Bird And the Mem-Sahibs rose with the Rising Moon.

In that June of long ago, I roamed The faded garden of my father's home; He'd gone away. There was nothing to do And no one to talk to. . . .

I must have known that giants have few friends (The great lurk shyly in their private dens)—And found you hidden by a dark green wall Of aerial roots.

Intruder in your pillared den, I stood And gently touched your old and rugged wood. And as my hands explored you, giant tree, I heard you singing!

-Ruskin Bond

### THE RAJA OF PUNNATHUR KOTTA

There is still in the puja room a sepia-tinted Photograph that is supposed to be my great grandfather's. A Raja like my grandfather, but not as impoverished As he was, by litigation and bad debts. He wears Two strands of pearls and a leopard's claw. Would he have thought That his descendant, only thrice removed, would cook, wash clothes, sweep Floors and wash the cups and plates used by those whose ancestors Were not kings or chieftains but tradesmen or perhaps, mere fieldhands? Great grandfather, owner of elephants, war-horses, Peacocks, rambling palaces and shrines, you should not have sent Out your seed on its long, demanding trip, trusting your wife's Blue blood to protect its pride. You threw your honour then In the incinerator of your lust. Just fifty years Have thinned out your blood and hers. My hands are callused and brown.

I wear no emerald ring. Only a thin gold band to Justify my occupation of the Reserve Bank's flat. I have picked up the mannerisms of the meek. With

### A HAND LIKE A BONSAI

No, not again, dear one, that tiresome game Which I played so long, so well, but they filled My forests with white fire while I did try with Tears to douse it until a terrible Wisdom settled on my heart, heavy like A tomcat and the soft pleas froze on my tongue . . . No, not again, the season is long past And gone. The long necked birds shrill from the trees. The copper shield bearers are in haughty bloom. I look through the sea as if it were a Window, the unfinished houses block my view. Through the scaffoldings I see the blue The sky Has a white patch, a cloud pasted clumsily On its wan cheek. At night, when my family Falls asleep, I pull their sleep over me Like a silken quilt and let my aloneness Heal. I recollect no matings then, no young Ardour, only the white snow country of A hospital sheet, and over it, like A dark bonsai, my father's beautiful hands Which chilled to marble, later, among The wilting wreaths. Where do the koels go who have Turned too old to sing, and, the mothers Unloved suddenly in middle age. Oh this World will crush me with its ways, this life astonish . . . From behind the butcher's lane I heard a goat Bleat today. Yet, I brought some mince and fed My poodle. She rolls over in welcome when I open the door with the latch key. She makes Me believe for a moment that I too have a home. . . . -Kamala Das August 1978

### 4 THE GYPSY

One must have seen him
With his bread-winning monkey
and performing parrot,
a pair of thoughts caged in silence
turning somersault: vibrations
torn from God's memory, rotting
between stonewalls,
grandeur of God
groomed for a living.

-Sankaran Kutty

### GLOW-WORMS IN DARKNESS

Can I be proud of these glow-worms flitting in the loamy layers of my mind the unoxygenated asylum for orphans held in umbilical love, the blood still running into?

If only I would shed a tear, shake off these sedentary sanctities till the mind resolves into a molecule of ecstasy, a point of light in the Easter sky.

—Sankaran Kutty

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

10th OCTOBER 1978

No. 24

### THE LIE RIDES AGAIN

W HAT is Indira Gandhi? Basically and essentially, an ambitious, self-willed, power-loving liar; one of the worst liars of this century.

Now that owing to the leniency and mistaken generosity of the Janata Government, which has not upto now even traced her secret hoards, she has, despite her very many grievous misdeeds, been able to work herself into the position of standing as a candidate for the Chickmaglur Lok Sabha seat, it may be worthwhile to note some of the things said about her and her lies by *Opinion* and its editor during and immediately after the Emergency:

The time between the proclamation of emergency in 1975 and the call for new Lok Sabha elections in 1977 may well be termed the period of the Triumph of the Lie. During this period the lie spread throughout the country, trampling underfoot any that opposed it in the slightest degree, silencing by force or fraud the very few who dared to challenge it, altering the laws themselves to suit it, rewarding the many culpable that gathered round it knowingly or foolishly. (15th March 1977)

Unfortunate the land that has an arrant liar at the head of its obsequious administration! The atmosphere of government is then irretrievably vitiated; the men engaged in its tasks see things not as they are but as the chief has made them appear in his lies. A haziness shadows all eyes, and decisions can scarcely be on merits.

Consider these most recent examples of the arrant lie (Indian Express, 18-8-1976): 'Prime Minister Gandhi told the Indian community living in Sri Lanka that the emergency in India had now been considerably relaxed and "it is no longer the same rigid one of the type when it was imposed".' But people in India are still being jailed without trial and even without cause given. The fundamental freedoms are as curtailed as ever. Except in the Prime Minister's mind there is no relaxation. She having fancied that there has been relaxation, believes it firmly to be fact. So for her there has been relaxation and she has no hesitation in stating it.

Mrs. Gandhi said there was no Press censorship now, and even the

guidelines to the Press had been "generally" relaxed.' This, when at least one journal has been forcibly closed down by order of Government for not submitting to pre-censorship, and when a leading daily newspaper has not been able to appear for several days owing to pre-censorship difficulties! Anyone who has any access to any editorial office knows how false the statement is. Yet Mrs. Gandhi makes it with perfect aplomb.

'She added, most of the people who had been taken into custody when the emergency was imposed had been released.' In fact, most of those arrested are still in Jail, though fourteen months have passed. Time and again has government been asked to give the figures of the people arrested. Time and again it has chosen not to do so. Recently the Home Minister took refuge in a roundabout formula which would mean that only about fourteen thousand had been detained! Independent sources put the figure at between one lakh twenty thousand and two lakhs.

'The question facing India today was how to make the people responsible to the nation without forcing them to do so, Mrs. Gandhi said.' Is the nation then something apart from the people? Is it an abstract concept like the dictatorship of the proletariat meaning a dictatorship over the proletariat by those who have seized power? In our view the people and the nation are one and there is no national interest other than the people's interest. Those who seek to differentiate between the two would seem to be serving some end of their own; arrogating to themselves the right to speak for, to manipulate, to wield power, in the name of the nation, over the people, the mass of Indians who constitute the entity India. Such individuals and groups are in fact authoritarian, as appears quite clearly from the use of the word 'forcing' above.

'Democrats do not force the people to do things. They reason with them, they persuade them, and in the Indian context, they very often succeed. Not a single measure for the people's good put forward by the government have the people opposed in the years since Independence. The defaults that there have been, have been by the government for reasons of its own. Nor again has the Government, when governing according to the law, been prevented from exercising its authority by the people. If for its own purpose in order to create an atmosphere and impression of crisis, it chooses deliberately not to use remedies lawfully within its power, it surely is not for it to complain about the people's behaviour and attitude, to proclaim Emergency and use of extraordinary measures against the people. (23 August 1976)

\* \* \* \*

And what is this truth? First and foremost, that for no public purpose was the Emergency imposed. You had powers enough, laws sufficient instruments ample, to have dealt fully and effectively with the siturion at that time, a situation that in fact would not have emerged at all if you had not, for purposes of your own, wished it to. Putting it so bluntly to so great a person no doubt sounds harsh, yet things

being as they are, it is not for this student to temporise or be evasive. Secondly, the ill-effects of the Emergency are many and far-reaching. They have gone beyond the physical; they have affected the Indian psyche most detrimentally. Because of your Emrgency, the Indian today is a lesser person than he or she was, a more ignoble specimen of humanity than in the past. Something of incalculable value has been lost. consciousness of being a free person, of being able to say what he thought, and do as he liked, that is no longer here. He has generally to look over his shoulder before he opens his mouth, to move carefully, to be ever watchful lest officialdom be offended. Not what is right, not what is reasonable, can be his criteria, but what will please authority, what will save him from even the shadow of ever-present danger. At any moment, by night or by day, his bell may be rung, his door knocked upon, and a policeman be there with a warrant to take him away into the unknown. Why? What has he done? He need not be told. What is his remedy? None under the Emergency. But, but surely he can do something about it? No, nothing, it is fate, inexorable, unyielding, let him resign himself to it, that is all. The atmosphere evoked by this state of affairs is enhanced by the rumours of happenings, strange and oppressive, that always arise when censorship makes news untrustworthy and comment unfree. Realise then, great lady, what you with your Emergency have made of the ordinary Indian citizen. Sycophancy and knee-bending you have established as the primary virtues, independent thinking and impartial judgement as the worst faults. Among the poor as among the well-to-do, you have induced an atmosphere of fear. Both are uncertain, knowing not what may come next, apprehensive in the extreme. You have added a terrible dimension to Indian life Is this your much-bruited discipline? If so, none can welcome it, not even those who in the short term benefit from it, provided of course, they have any regard for the country. Such as have not, born traitors we may term them, need no consideration; fortunately their number can be but infinitesimal. (22nd June 1976)

\* \* \* \*

Praised be the Lord! Most gratefully do we thank Him for this His mercy that we who, for the last eighteen months, have been compelled to walk in the darkness of the shadow of the valley of death, have at last emerged into the light. And also for this that the feet of our eldest daughter, who for the same eighteen months had strayed most grievously into authoritarian and dictatorial regions, are now set again on the path of homeward democratic rectitude. Our daughter 'was dead (to us) and is alive again'; she 'was lost, and is found'. Fitting is it that on this Republic Day we should be glad.

How shall we receive this newly-restored daughter? Shall we, following the Biblical precedent, kill for her the fatted calf, strew flowers at her feet and make much of her? Enthusiastically would I recommend that course, were it not for two circumstances which differentiate her case from that of the son in the Book. The son in his wanderings harmed only himself; our daughter has done great damage to all of us,

even making substantial breaches in the edifice of our ancestral home. The son was repentant and begged his father's forgiveness; our daughter glorifies her misdeeds, and far from being ashamed of them, vaunts her pride in them. Almost it seems she would return to them at the first opportunity. (24 January, 1977)

\* \* \* \*

Again, the exquisite Death Scene from Phaedo, showing. Socrates at his best, remained 'Not Cleared'. The Triumph of the Lie clearly necessitated the elimination of even the slightest sign of its opposite, nobility of character and mind expressing the truth. It did not matter if the quality was displayed, as in several of the instances, over two thousand years ago. Ancient or modern, it was anothema to Indira and her myrmidons. Their regime, born through lies, nurtured by lies and flourishing on lies, could not tolerate it. Will you let this Triumph of the Lie continue? Or will you firmly say to it, its authors and sycophants, 'Enough; tomorrow belongs to the truth and me'? (15 March, 1977)

Then, the electors of India emphatically returned the right answer. May the electors of Chickmaglur have sufficient public spirit to do so now and save the country from the very detrimental results certain to follow from the election to Parliament of this most ruthless enemy of the truth.

-barre as most all truth?

"Liars—past all shame—so past all truth."

\* \* \* \*

"A lie should be trampled on and extinguished wherever found.—I am for fumigating the atmosphere when I suspect that falsehood, like pestilence, breathes around me."

"It is easy to tell a lie, but hard to tell only one lie."

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

**17th OCTOBER 1978** 

No. 25

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### THE INDIRA STYLE

HERE is the Publisher's Note (Macmillan Company of India) of Manohar Malgonkar's The Men Who Killed Gandhi:

The publication of this book has been held over because it was considered inadvisable to bring it out while the 'Emergency' in India lasted. It was feared that the book might be proscribed and might land its author in trouble. That this fear was not altogether unreal was proved when, shortly after the Emergency had ended, the author received a package containing a copy of his typescript which had been intercepted in the mails by the censor. Many of the passages were ominously marked in red ink and the relevant pages 'flagged' for easy reference.

And yet, there are men and women who want Indira back in Parliament, nay more, in power; demented fools who, having eyes see not, having ears hear not, having minds think not, or arrant knaves who look forward to a profitable future in the utterly unscrupulous, lying, catchas-catch-can regime she can furnish; in either case, no lovers of their country.

### **TALKING**

#### GAURI DESHPANDE

One evening I find myself at a dinner composed entirely of school teachers. The hostess introduces me, the odd man out, lamely as "a writer". This description, I feel, is wholly adequate to define the activities of my three-year old who writes indefatiguably on walls, bed-sheets, important papers and antique books. I would have chosen a slightly more specific denotation of my occupation, but since my husband is not present to lend me an easily acceptable identity, I take the one handed me, and smile feebly.

The senior school teacher asks, "What do you write?"

By now I have answered this question often enough to make a low fast return just clearing the net. "Oh, just about everything," I answer very seriously, again thinking of the indescriminate writer in the family. She is not the Senior S. T. for nothing. Before I could feel complacent, she returns with, "And where do you publish?" Aha! Just the right, low one, a little to the left. I am ready to smash it back-handed over the head. I rattle off the names of five or six periodicals. Her face is bewildered and indignant. "You mean, you write in Marathi?" There

is an undertone of "Why didn't somebody tell me!" "Yes," I say, "Mostly." "But, why do you write in Marathi?" It had never occurred to me that anyone would actually ask such a question. "Because it is my language," I answer. "Really? How amazing! One would never have suspected it, because your English is very good, you know. You should try writing in English. It will be an example to all these Indian students who use the most atrocious Indianisms all the time. You know, the 'yaar's' and 'nakhra's' and God alone knows what else. If ever I catch them saying any of that rubbish in my hearing, I let them have it, but do you think it cures those little beasties? No way!"

I am about to tell her that I found her English full of all kinds of strange Englishisms and Americanisms, but before I could say it, her colleague brings reinforcements. "And that's not all!" she says, "They think any Indian word can be made into English by attaching things like 'fying' to it. The other day my daughter asked me, 'Mom, do you bhoonofy pyaj before the tadka or after?' Honestly, I tell you." All the other S. T.s shudder, but I say mildly that that sentence was perfectly intelligible to me. They all caw at me in phrases like "it was not on", and "it showed mixed up thinking", "I was having them on", and that "I gotta be kidin'".

I didn't argue with them right there, but I felt sad. I wondered if they knew the harm they were doing to the cause of English in India. Surely they were not deaf to the fact that "English" English had not stood still after Shakespeare wrote his plays in it. It had continuously grown and changed and adapted itself to the needs of those who spoke it. Surely a language is not anybody's private property. Anyone who uses it has a right to push it and stretch it a little to suit his or her needs. After all, the correct term to exactly describe "bhoonofy" in English is not English at all, but French. They seemed to feel that any whimsical or slangy changes that are to be made in the English language have to made by the English only, or, at the most by Americans or Australians. Indians must only then imitate those slangy or strange words, say a few years later, to show that we are not, after all, that far behind times. But does this not encourage Indians to think of English as a "foreign" tongue? Doesn't this prevent us from treating it as "Our" language? All of our own languages are forever borrowing words, phrases, slang from one another. Talk to any school or college student. It is hardly possible for them to say one whole sentence in one single language. Hindi, Gujarati, English or Kannada words will happily enliven a Marathi sentence. And what's more, they all understand one another perfectly. I am sure the S. T.s are right in their attitude if they want English to be just another foreign language. Then they are justified in thinking that we must follow the "best" examples of it. After all the French taught in schools could hardly be the patois spoken in New Orleans in the last century. But as one who loves English, its richness, its flexibility, its versatility, its expressibility, humour and tenor, I feel sure that it will not mind a few shoves and pushes from a friend, nor a few astonishing, perhaps dubious gifts. After all, one talks to communicate and I defy an Indian to say

that he or, especially she has not understood the meaning of "Mom, do you bhoonofy pyaj before the tadka or after?" And if any tell me that they have not understood that query, then I can only tell them to stop all this nakhra because the time for maskofying the gora saabs is gone!

### VIEW -

Prof. B. P. Adarkar, who has just returned from Los Angeles, which is next door to Torrance sends a cutting from the Daily Breeze of Torrance "dealing with the problem of English as an international language" and suggests that it be reproduced, "in view of the exactly opposite trend of government language policy in this country." Here it is:

A serious debate is now going on between Italian sociologists and men of letters as to whether English should become compulsory for all Italians, with Italian remaining as a parallel language or even being abolished.

Underlying the movement that is now almost daily discussed in newspapers and magazines is the feeling that the influence of the Italian language throughout the world has been dying for centuries and that Italians had better move fast if they are to be able to continue to communicate.

To speak Italian or not has even become a political issue, with some sociologists and authors claiming that English is now the language of Italy's technical and industrial ruling class and the proletariat must be given an equal chance of understanding what is going on.

The man who kicked off the debate was sociologist Francesco Alberni, who said in a front page article in Italy's biggest newspaper, Corriere della Sera, that "Italian has ceased to be a universal vehicle of communication and is becoming a European dialect."

Italian is spoken today by 56 million Italians at home and 6 million abroad.

It is used on musical scores, offered in schools in 88 countries and comes 11th on the list of most widely spoken languages.

But Alberoni maintains that, as in Holland and Scandinavia, Italy should have English as a second language and thus become a bilingual nation.

"English is rapidly asserting itself as the only dominant language at world level . . . as Greek and Latin used to be," says Alberoni.

If Italians don't learn English, they will not be able to engage in a dialogue but only to "receive dumbly, like a mute or an illiterate," he says.

Many wealthy and influential Italians already speak English or send their children to English schools, creating two different classes, says Alberoni.

"A revolutionary act is needed to avoid this danger. The new Latin must be made available to all at all scholastic levels from the kindergarten to the university. It must be adopted as the current scientific and commercial language until widespread bilingualism is achieved," he said.

Rome University's language philosophy dean Prof. Tullio De Mauro

agreed that there should be a second accepted language but that it should be Spanish or French, both easier to learn because of their common Latin roots.

Author Nanni Balestrini is all for abolishing the language of Dante, Boccaccio and Moravia.

"I would just have English for communicating abroad and local dialects for communicating among ourselves," he said.

Alberto Moravia himself said: "I think it is right that everyone should learn the English, not just the sons of millionaires. English should not just be a privilege as it is today."

Author Manlio Cancogni, who lived and taught for four years in the United States, contradicted Alberoni saying: "The only think I like about Italy is the language."

Maria Corti, professor of Italian language history at Pavia University, said Italians have not even learned Italian yet.

### A FROG SCREAMS

Sitting near a mountain stream, I heard a sound like the creaking Of a branch in the wind. It was a frog screaming In the jaws of a long green snake. I could not bear that hideous cry: With two sharp sticks I made The twisting snake disgorge the frog, Who hopped quite spry out of harm's way And sailed away on a floating log. Pleased with the outcome, I released the green grass-snake. Stood back and wondered: "Is this what it feels like to be God?" "Only what it feels like to be English," Said God (speaking for a change in French), "I might have let the snake finish his lunch."

-Ruskin Bond

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

28th NOVEMBER 1978

No. 31

### **SOME JOURNALISTS**

HAT is it that makes eminent journalists who have gone through the emergency, experienced its arbitrariness and unreason, seen the web of lies it spread through every nook and corner of the land, argue once again in favour of its author and originator? They do not deny the viciousness that she let loose upon the people. That she has not repented they agree That her caucus is still around her busy as usual, they admit. And yet all their endeavour is to make her acceptable to the Indian people. Far better this imperious Queen Stork for you, oh frogs of India, they argue, than your present King Logs. Your natures, your varying interests, will never fit you for the exercise of proper democratic government. You must bend and bow before charisma. In that lies both your destiny and your prosperity. They do not give any guarantee that Queen Stork will not repeat her crimes and excesses, if returned to power. They simply hope she will not. But that in the interest of the country, she should be in power they have no doubt. This is the substance of what they put forward in much more sophisticated form to their readers, especially to the intellectuals most alienated by their favourite's past behaviour.

A simple answer may be, these men are hirelings and write to order. The proprietors of their papers may so earnestly desire Indira back in power that they may have ordered these very able and skilled experts to do their best to create strong public opinion in her favour. This they do in two ways, be horrified at the very thought of punishing her for past misdeeds, animadvert at length upon the sheer futility of such action, and commend her as a pillar of decisiveness and strength in contrast to the weary Willies in to-day's government. Accepting, for the sake of argument, their estimates of the personalities concerned, there still remains the question, is decisiveness or being strong in the cause of evil a virtue? Is it enough to be just decisive and strong and not consider what you are going to be decisive about? Strongly and decisively some make evil their good, and adjust their practise to this change. Shall we then stand around admiring each enormity, and saying on each occasion, Wah, wah, how strong, how decisive!

Another explanation may be that these men are genuinely attracted towards the wielders of power as to the manner born, the Hitler, the Stalin, the Indira types. Right and wrong do not enter into their judgements in regard to them. They are there, it is enough, let the rest con-

In Trust For The People... The entire wealth gathered by the Founder of Tata Enterprises, and his sons and successors, over almost a century of industrial pioneering is bequeathed to Tata philanthropic trusts and foundations.

The whole of that wealth is held in trust for the people and used exclusively for their benefit—scholarships for education, grants for rural welfare, contributions for medical research, support for national institutions, and donations for relief from natural disasters.

The circle is thus complete what came from the people goes back to the people many times over.)





form. For all the evil such personalities do, they have a ready answer; necessity, and they do not recognise that this very necessity has been the tyrants' plea from the dawn of history. So to them, the evil Indira did was necessary; the evil she may do hereafter if restored to power will also be justified by necessity. In such and such circumstances, what else could she do, they will argue, of course there had to be detention under MISA, or a quick change in the constitution, or whatever else she thought proper. So much responsibility she carries; you surely would not handicap her by these quibbles about right and wrong and constitutional propriety.

Perhaps, however, these are long-eyed men. They see far into the future. They see Indira restored to power, in the midst of her family and her caucus. They see themselves on the edge of the caucus, being greeted with smiles by Indira, "Ah yes so-and-so, I remember you. Very remarkable articles, those of yours, I thought. Now there are various spheres where your abilities would be most useful. You must talk it over with X here, and then see me again. Oh, be sure you will always be welcome," What dazzling prospects! And such graciousness, such charm! A very hard heart one would need indeed to resist that, when one's head one has already placed at her disposal.

Perhaps, again, these men have an inborn sense of order; a place for everything and everything in its place is their ideal. The untidiness, the confusion of the Janata offends them so much that they feel, better by far the regimentation, even tyranny, of Indira, then this relaxation, this free-for-all. A little 'danda' is good for everyone, except of course myself, and I must take care to be on the side of the wielders rather than on that of those against whom it is wielded. Having taken that elemetary precaution, with a tranquil mind I can say 'Let the show go on'.

Of such men it may be said that they are a curse to the body politic. They elegantly and effectively militate against all ethical values, against personal freedom, against civil liberty, against freedom of expression, freedom of the press etc. for they support strongly the destroyer of all these and are constantly at work to restore her to power.

### **COMMENT**





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arrogant and vulgar contempt for constitutional niceties and human rights. That may be out weighed by India's yearning for strong rule, for a mother figure. Has democracy the right to vote democratically for its own extinction? India may think so, and pay for it."

Courtesy: Daily Telegraph, 9-11-78

Mr. Shore's fulsome praise of Mrs. Gandhi will do her little good. It should do him more harm. Those Indians who have heard of him probably care nothing for his opinions. We here, however, are bound to take careful note of the views of someone who has been spoken of as a possible leader of the Labour party and thus a possible Prime Minister. What is most disquieting about them is his disrespect for democracy. He appears to think that democracy is quite compatible with the suspension of all civil and constitutional safeguards, the terrorisation of judges, the arbitary arrest of political opponents and others without reason, charge or trial and their imprisonment in the most cruel and noisome dungeons, compulsory mass sterilisation carried out by hideous methods, and worse. Is this or the like what we are to expect from Mr. Shore, had he the power and the nerve?

Mr. Shore rails against "the instant judgements and sometimes" envenomed pens" of journalists who have criticised Mrs Gandhi. Well, he has had more than 18 months to form his own judgement. It is to the effect that democracy was restored in India after the emergency ended: "the suspension and the restoration were the decision of the same Government." In fact democracy was restored (it is one thing in a way to Mrs. Gandhi's credit) before the emergency ended. The emergency had been merely suspended temporarily for the duration of the election campaign. Who can doubt that it would have been reimposed had Mrs Gandhi won, as she was confident of doing? What she in fact sought was popular support for emergency rule. She did not get it. Immediately after her defeat, the acting President, on her advice, revoked the emergency. "Envenomed pens" have suggested that this was because she feared the application of its harsh and lawless provisions to herself and her shameless entourage. If Mr. Shore is wise, he will in future be more discreet. And that goes for Mr. Foot, who was echoing him last night.

Courtesy: Daily Telegraph (18-11-78)

### **DIALOGUE**

Other Self: Well, old friend?

Self: Not particularly. However I'm sure you didn't take the trouble to come here just to enquire about my health. So your real question, sir? O.S.: No, no, I'm genuinenly interested in your health. So tell me. S: This week has seen added to my other troubles, especially the eye



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which does not see but still stings, burns and weeps, a most painful tooth, which after some days of putting up with, had to be opened up yesterday and continues under treatment. For the rest, briefly, all things that were wrong, continue wrong, and their number goes up almost daily.

- O.S.: Ah, well, you'll complete seventy-eight in less than a fortnight, and as you yourself have said, ten years must be added to that for your many serious illnesses and operations. A ripe eighty-eight, in fact. How do you really feel? "Grow old along with me! The best is yet be", eh? S: Nothing of the kind. I don't ask for any one's company in my old age, and I'm fairly certain there is no best or even very good to come now. O.S.: Oh, come, you must hope for something. What is it?
- S: By the time you are my age, you've learnt that hope is a dream while awake. So I hope for nothing. I shall, of course, be thankful for a peaceable death.
- O.S.: But I don't understand this. You hope for nothing, you talk of death as if it were an old familiar, and still you slave away at your reading and writing, your *Opinion*. Why? Nobody in authority has ever done any of the things you've suggested in it—very worthwhile things almost all of them, let me say—and yet at sevety-eight (properly eight-eight) you don't call it a day, and sit and relax. Explain.
- S: Well, I was thinking very much along these lines a short while ago. As physical disabilities grew, and the best part of life became more and more just sitting in the long chair on the verandah looking at the green trees, with feet upon the small table and not a thought in one's mind, it seemed fitting one should make an end, leaving the world to its people, free from the interference of one almost half out of it already. But then came Chikmaglur and apprehensions about the recrudesence of tyranny and the bad days all over again, and so one felt one had to carry on.
- O.S.: You think your writing is going to make any difference? I tell you no. Is there more honesty, a higher sense of duty among the people because of your writing? You might just as well have closed down and given yourself an easier time.
- S: Perhaps you're right, I might have; anyhow I won't now.
- O. S.: So the only relief for you is a quick and—what did you call it—peaceable, death?
- S: Exactly. Not, mind you, that I am in acute pain or discomfort twenty-four hours a day. I sleep well, I enjoy good food and drink, I appreciate beauty in all its forms, I discriminate between good and evil in their many manifestations, in brief, I'm alive, though I have no objection to dying whenever the call comes.
- O.S.: I thought I'd find you discontented and leave you more discontented. You spoilsport, you've made me lose my fun.
- S: Tut, tut, very regretable of me, no doubt. However there is always another time unless Death intervenes.

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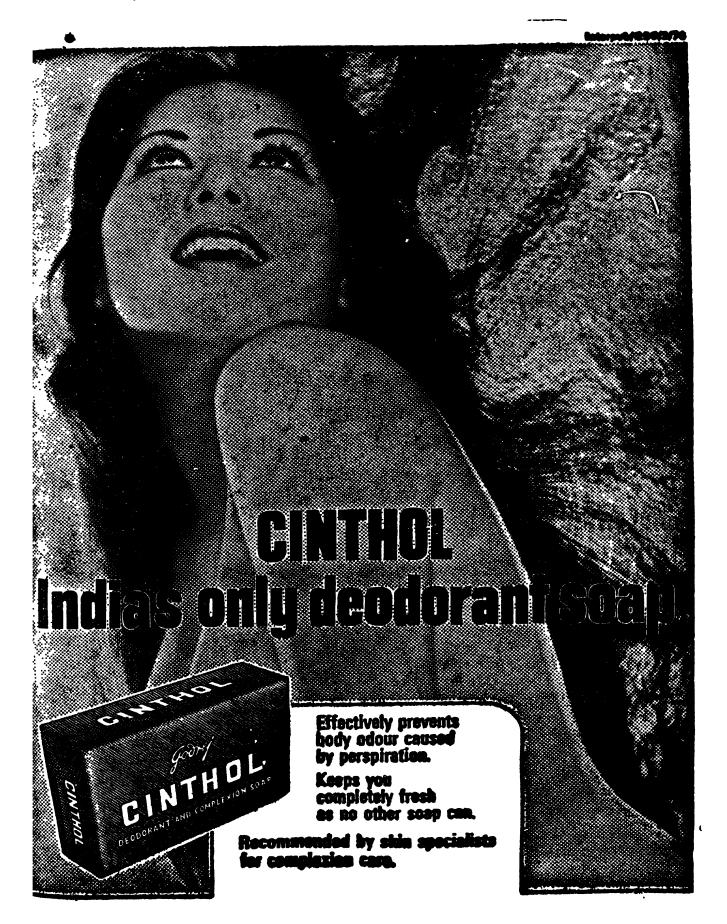
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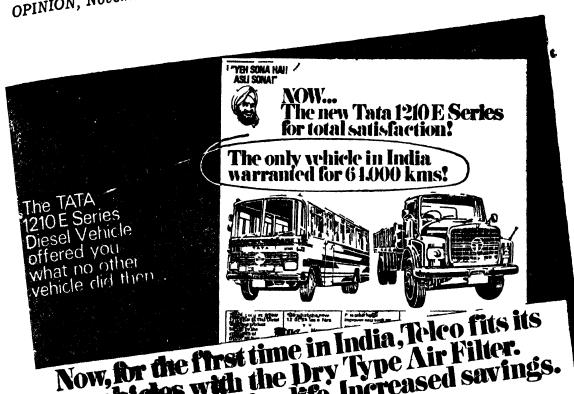
### TALES OF OUR TIME

TALL, formidable looking man enters the office of his superior officer and throwing down a piece of paper on his desk, says "So you have charge-sheeted me. I haven't done this, that and the other which I should have done, etc., etc. Very well, I am one of the hundreds in this organisation of whom this would be true. But you charge-sheet me especially. Why, I want to know, why?" The officer explained that his was the case that had come to notice prominently and so action was taken; nothing personal had been intended. "Be that as it may," said the man, "I think you'll find it expedient to withdraw the charge-sheet when you know who you're dealing with. I am the leader of a group of two hundred. Rough men we are, and we play very rough games, remember, so don't try and tangle with us. Your wife, I am sure, would hate being a widow." "Look," said the officer, "don't try and frighten me. If I'm to die, I will, and if I'm not to, none of your raggle-taggle will succeed in killing me. Also I promise you if I'm killed, you won't live very long to tell the tale. So get out and prepare the answer to the charge-sheet.

"Ah, you're that type, are you? Well listen I haven't finished yet. I am not without political influence you know. I can get many things done through politicians who are indebted to me, even a Minister or two, you know. Since you won't be reasonable—you know you and I could work together admirably if you would only co-operate, I like stout-hearted fellows myself-I shall have to get you ordered by your superiors to drop this ridiculous business against me. How will you like it then, eh? Your superior will have to buckle down, when his superior tells him he's been spoken to by the Minister himself, and wants to know who's this awkward fellow who's caused all this schmozzle. No tact at all, no, may be sound enough, but no tact, and how in these days can one work with such utterly tactless people! Ha, ha, ha, I'd like to see your face then. Drop this charge-sheet business now that I've put you so fully in the picture or shall I go ahead?" The officer, too indignant to say anything at length, just pointed to the door and exclaimed "out and be damned". Taking a long drink of cool water from his thermos, the officer sighed and sat down. The fellow could probably do what he said. He'd heard about him before. His own superior was a weak sister. Pressure enough and he would crumple. Everything depended then on the head of the organisation. Was he stout-hearted, would he put the right above selfinterest? Well, he must wait and see. Perhaps it wouldn't do any harm to tell the story at once in detail to both his superiors. Oh, damn, there was so much to do, and now this.

And there, good reader, wishing this gallant cavalier the best of luck, must we leave him. May the Fates be kind to him!

An old man stood, very tired and rather bewildered, trying to catch

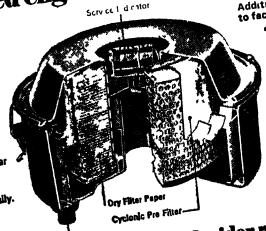


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a taxi at the street-corner where many thundered past him, most occupied. one or two empty but scornful of him and his desperate signs. Weary of standing-up straight, he leaned against a wall and sighed deeply. At this rate he would not get a taxi for the next half-hour. He couldn't move on, for his shoulders were bent and the busy cross-road demanded complete attention and prompt decision to get to the other side successfully. His head began to be muzzy too, for he had just come out of his dentist's after having a most painful tooth attended to. Suddenly, he heard a soft voice say "Waiting for a taxi, sir?" "Yes, kind lady, I am, but they don't seem to see me." A young, slight lady smiled and said, "Don't move from here. I'll see what can be done." Waiting for a few minutes at the road edge, she turned, waved at him and set off down the road in the direction from which the traffic was coming. Five minutes passed, ten, and then a taxi stopped gently at the curb, and out of it stepped the young lady. Holding the door open she gestured to the old man to enter. Thanking her profusely he said, and where may I take you? Her answer was, nowhere, I am just around here, and she vanished into a nearby shop with a smile and a wave May all her times be happy, this good Samaritan's, for she recognised another's pressing need, and put herself out nobly to meet it!

"The weight of this sad time we must obey Speak what we feel, not what we ought to say."

"My brother kneels, so saith Kabir,
To stone and brass in heathen-wise.
But in my brother's voice I hear
My own unanswered agonies.
His god is as his fates assign
His prayer is all the world's—and mine."

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

5th DECEMBER 1978

No. 32

### THE LEOPARDESS

THE leopardess of Ramadrug had done much harm to the people and cattle of the surrounding district. So when one morning it was known that during the night it had miscalculated a spring and tumbled down a deep disused well, a sigh of relief went up from the people generally. Now at last, they thought, it would no longer rampage and ravage, the danger from it would be over

But as is usual amongst us there was no lack of wiseacres in that society. Some were filled with pity. That fine lithe animal, grace in every line of it, speed its very essence, to be so confined, alas the sadness of it, they said, let us let down a bucket and line, give it a chance to get out of the well. And who knows once it is out, it may do no damage in future; its whole nature may have changed. Ah, yes, the leopardess may still lie down with the lamb, the lamb still frisk beside it on the grass. What, you would deny the existence of miracles? Alas how sceptical, how cynical men can be! And then came the trump argument, but we are sure you wouldn't like to be regarded as vindictive! The world might call you that, if you don't help the unfortunate leopardess now. Vindictive, what an opprobious term! Oh, no, no, no, let us help the unfortunate creature, let her off lightly, yes? Common sense however, prevailed in the end

This then is Indira Gandhi's case before the Lok Sabha She is definitely down a well, and her capacity for mischief can be destroyed, or at the least, greatly reduced, if the Lok Sabha will take the full action it can. The acts which have brought her to this pass were heinous in the extreme, even in this particular instance. Inordinate arrogance and nepotism motivated them and there can be not even the shadow of an excuse for them. What then is your duty, Members of Parliament, to make the country safe against this dangerous enemy, or to shiver and tremble and vaccilate, all in the imaginary fear of being called vindictive? Revenge is mine, saith the Lord. However, the most drastic action you take against the culprit in this matter will be not revenge, but merely justice.

### NONE FOR THE ROAD

### BILL AITKEN

DRIVING from Delhi to Dehra Dun can be hazardous for those who prefer more transcendental beverages than their re-cycled urine. It can also illustrate how the U.P. Government turns a blind eye to the preamble of the Indian Constitution.

After passing through the wet districts of Meerut, Mussafarnagar and Saharanpur you enter the dry district of Dehra Dun. There is no notice board warning you and the check-post is situated several miles within the dry area. (One trusts the authorities are geographically more punctilious on our international borders.) If you happen to be carrying a battle of liquor it is too late to retreat or quaff. You have been lured, honest citizen to commit an offence. The U.P. Tourist Department in Delhi is still cheerfully distributing its guide for Mussoorie with the news (six months out of date) that prohibition is not in force. Having been successfully enticed by the Tourist Department blandishments to "enjoy snowfall in Mussoorie" you are now at the mercy of their colleagues in Excise, and that tot of brandy recommended by the doctor to warm the inner man can land you, if you are an Indian Hindu or Muslim in jail.

Even if you quote the constitutional provision allowing drink for medicinal purposes it won't help. Permits are not available to ordinary Indian citizens under any circumstances. Thus in Dehra Dun only foreigners can drink. Good God, everyone will say, What about the Military? Well, yes. As a matter of fact they are the only Indians who are permitted to drink, whether they be Hindus, Muslims, Jews, Parsis or Christians. Isn't some discrimination involved here?

Whatever, your honest (civilian) citizen has to make a fifty-mile (or two hundred and fifty if he lives in the interior) round trip to exercise the somewhat basic freedom of choosing what he wants to imbibe.

That there are few takers for this excursion to wet pastures might suggest that Doonsmen are less gregarious than their pahari counterparts in other God-fearing lands. The Scots have always got round the problem of a dry sabbath by hiring a charabanc and driving the minimum mileage necessary to qualify as bona fide travellers. And like the Indians the Scots have no scruples about selling their produce to hasten the damnation of others.

But why travel to Saharanpur when you have home delivery in Dehra Dun? All an unemployed student has to do to make a hundred rupees a trip is to shuttle back and forth between wet and dry areas in a bus. Better say ninety because the check-post staff have to live. And don't blame the war widow whose cottage-industry switches to cider, or the honest police constable who is tempted to resell that confiscated bottle of Scotch, worth more than his monthly wage packet. Blame the policy that in the name of saving a certain section of society demoralises the rest of it.

The fanatical, unsecular flavour of prohibition is revealed in the byelaws HE the Governor has notified that Indian Jews, Parsis and Christians can carry in transit through a dry area, but not drink, one whole bottle of liquor But only by rail or air. The Indian Jew who had the temerity to take his bottle by bullock cart, or the Parsi by bicycle would be in trouble with His Excellency. So would the Christian travelling by boat presumably. Sounds like more discrimination. It is.

What about Freethinkers or Secularists? They don't even get a mention in our secular state. And what about foreign Hindus and Muslims? As tourists they cannot be prevented from drinking. Though all tourists are limited to two bottles. So much for India's great traditions of hospitality.

But is prohibition an Indian tradition at all? Certainly not in the Rigveda. It is the culmination of the modern Hindu Revival which in turn was sparked off ironically enough by Puritan missionary critics Gandhiji's prejudices against both missionaries and drink are acknowledged in the Autobiography (Chapters X and XI). When a Rajkot missionary challenged the Mahatma to prove his words the challenge was not accepted. And how can "a stripling of eighteen without any experience of the world" be expected to form a rational opinion on drink when his arm is twisted by a convert to Jainism into making a vow of abstinence to win his mother's permission to sail the kala pani?

It is conveniently overlooked that the Mahatma could scarcely be called a democrat (One suspects that his equation with God rather than the people accounts for prohibition and cow protection straying into a secular constitution) The danger of national guius is in the silencing of all dissent. Thus the citizens of Dehra Dun deem it more seemly to bribe and smuggle instead of move the courts. "Satyameva Jayate," but until then the greatness of the nation is whittled down by ideas foreign to its genius.

### **COMMENT**

What is cricket? A game

What is music? The food of the soul.

Now, however popular a game may be, should it have precedence over the food of the soul?

All India Radio, Bombay obviously thinks it should, for on the days of Test Matches and even other important matches, it has no hesitation in cutting out or drastically reducing the time allotted to Western music (1.30 to 2 and 2.10 to 2 30 in the afternoon) and using it for a ball to ball cricket commentary.

That this is quite absurd doesn't seem to occur to it. It could put cricket on to another frequency and so leave the music undisturbed, but that would presumably need rearrangement, and why bother when you can just cut out a not very large class of listeners, and also give the staff less work?

Nothing is said here bout the nature of the AIR programming in music; that is all story. But unless this broadcasting organisation considers music a superfluity, a mere gee-gaw, let it not trample it underfoot so wantonly and viciously.

"A special kind of curse rests upon you," said an esteemed friend the other day. "At your naming there must have been two fairies. The good one said, 'You will always give right advice'; the bad one added, 'But no one will listen to it in Independent India.' And so it has been over the last thirty years. Take the case of corruption in politics, and so, largely in the country. Everyone is now agreed with you that the basic cause is the collection of large funds for election by politicians from tycoons and richmen, who in turn have to be given their cut in cash and kind. But no one will try out the remedy you suggested nearly thirty years ago and have reiterated at least fifteen times since then, collection of a small fixed sum annually from a number of people, not excessively large, and meeting election costs from that fund. You have given the details time and again and shown how it could work and would lead to the very great reduction, if not total elimination, of political corruption. But not even your admirers and friends are prepared to carry it out. Not that they have any argument against it. No, but it's simply too simple, so there must be something-which they don't see now-wrong with it, perhaps. In any case, it goe; against all established practice and so. . . . Most sickening, don't you think?" "Well, I suppose it's very good for my ego," said the old man. "Keeps it sufficiently deflated, so there's a particle of good in this undoubted evil. Also think of this:

'Honour and shame from no condition rise, Act well your part and there the honour lies'."

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

12th DECEMBER 1978

No. 33

### IMPRESSIONS OF KENYA

### TAYA ZINKIN

K ENYANS are black Yankees. Nowhere else where I have been have the United States been evoked so repeatedly by the way things look and the way people behave.

In Kenya as in America, everything is "bigger and better." T-bone steaks, jacarandas, hibiscus, bougainvillia, jumbo prawns, all those—except the prawns which grow in the sea—are imported and are much bigger and much more beautiful than in their country of origin. The jacarandas, for example, reach dizzy heights and are as thick, in some cases, as the famous chinars of Kashmir and nowhere else before, not even in the United States, have I been able to sit in the shade of an hibiscus tree in full bloom. As for the bougainvillia they range in size and colour incredibly. It is not just the flowers which are bigger, the animals are bigger too. The elephants are huge and legion; some of the antelopes are bigger than large cows. This is not surprising. Kenya is blessed with a climate so ideal, at least on the plateau, that tropical and alpine vegetation co-exist the whole year round, be it strawberries and string beans or mangoes and pineapples which melt in the mouth.

But it is not just the fauna or the flora which force the comparison with the United States of America. What forces this comparison is at the human rather than at the geo-physical level.

Kenyans, like Americans, are excessively democratic and totally devoid of any sense of hierarchy. The only word of respect is "Mzee" which is reserved for age. Even the meanest and poorest talks to those in positions of authority, or wealth, or knowledge, with complete lack of subservience or respect, unless they be old. It is not just that the waiter in the restaurant or the bell-boy in the hotel will interrupt your thoughts and conversation to make friendly comments about the weather or to enquire about your health, it is also that the Chief of Protocol, if he is meeting you at the airport, will think nothing of helping to carry your luggage. In a visit to a factory I was struck by the total equality which pervaded the behaviour of everybody from that of the unskilled pushing hand carts to that of the Chief Engineer.

Not just democracy, but a certain lack of concern for sartorial elegance once again reminds one of the U.S. People wear what they like, when they like, whether it suits them or not. This is particularly notice-

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able with the women, who are so busy working that they probably have very little time to spare for niceties. Another similarity which is striking, is the way in which Kenyans absorb and adapt until things totally imported become part and parcel of their own society. This, too, is an American characteristic. Everybody knows that the famous American hamburger steaks and hot-dogs are of German origin, that cranberry sauce, that "American culinary speciality", comes from Scandinavia and that French fries, as the name indicates, come from France. However, mention the word hamburger, hot-dog, cranberry sauce and French fries and what springs to mind? A diner-saloon or a drug store. In Kenya too, everything has been imported: coffee, tea, sugar-cane, flowering trees, even Sikhism. And it has all become Kenvan I was amazed to see, in addition to Indian Sikhs, whose appearance I am familiar with, a not inconsiderable number of black Sikhs, very handicapped as far as the tricological attributes of their religion are concerned by the fact that African hair tends to remain very short and that few Africans can grow the mandatory beard. I do not think that it is an accident that in Kenya there have been Africans prepared to try Sikhism. Kenyans will try anything.

It was a German volunteer who got the idea that fish verterbrae might make suitable ornaments, so now the Turkanas specialize in making 'traditional' custom jewelry with fish vertebrae. It was a Frenchman who brought to the Kambas a wooden mark which had been praised at an exhibition of West African art in Paris—so now the Kambas mass produce traditional replicas of that two-tone wooden mask which tourists lap up in the belief it is a traditional Kamba mask. And the Kambas whose Calabashes traditionally are not decorated, as a visit to the National Museum shows, have been quick to ornament their Calabashes, not for their own use, but for tourists, with animal drawings heavily inspired by the wall paintings the tourists admire so much replicas of in the Nairobi Museum. Indeed, even the Masai, famed for their resistance to change, have been infected to the extent that their little girls wear elaborate earrings—which they reluctantly part with, for a consideration, and which are traditionally reserved for mothers who have borne a number of sons, a biological impossibility for six and seven year olds. Even the Maisai have noticed that tourists are prepared to pay more for items they believe to be genuine. What could be more genuine than jewelry taken off a native? Even more interesting perhaps is the concession Makonde sculptors have made to air-travel. Their very complex and convoluted statues, carved out of ebony, used to be so heavy that tourists were put off by the prospect of having to pay the air freight. So, changing their tradition, they now carve airy statues, just as complex but very light because there is hardly any wood left, since most of the pattern is holes. I could go on and on. The point I am hammering at is that Kenyans are infinitely flexible and pragmatic, whatever be their tribe.

This willingness to adapt and experiment, which is also a feature of American society, is the greatest asset of this exuberant African paradise.

I have been trying to work out why Kenyans, unlike Nigerians, or Britons or Indians for that matter, are so willing to try anything new, be it Sikhism or jumping from the pastoral to the computer age. The reasons must be many and in the short time I spent there it was not possible to work all of them out. However, a few reasons spring to mind. First, there is the fact that at the turn of the century, Kenya was very much behind. It had been spared the slave trade because being in the middle of Africa it was not on anybody's trade route and the Masai, with their tremendous energy and their long spears were enough to deter prowling neighbours. Secondly, by the time the British took an interest in Kenya and decided to become settlers they found that the land Which was to become known as the 'White Highlands', and which combines' a climate much better than England's with a landscape as magnificent as Scotland's, were empty. The Kikuyus, whose land it had been, had recently been driven out by the Masai, who are nomads. This settlement, by the British, on the most fertile land in Kenya, iniquitous as it must have appeared, has been one of independent Kenya's greatest assets. There is now plenty of very good land available for re-settlement and the people who have been re-settled on that land have not been displacing others. Most big white farms have been sold and a number of them have been broken up into plots which have been allotted to those who were farm-labourers before Independence. Most of these labourers happen to be Kikuyus, because when the British needed labour to farm their lands the Kikuyus came back to work the land from which they had been ousted by the Masai since they had no land on which to live. Perhaps the best way to explain what I mean by saying that this white settlement has turned out to be a great blessing for Kenya would be to compare what happened in Kenya with what would have happened in the Punjab after Independence if the British had been the sole owners of the Canal Colonies so that after their departure in 1947, Punjabis could have been alloted land without need for the terrible bloodshed that took place when Sikhs and Muslims were forced to swap by civil war. Kenya, history helped by the late Mzee Jomo Kenyatta, has been very kind to the emergent nation.

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# OPINION

ol. XIX

19th DECEMBER 1978

No. 34

### THE PUBLIC VOICE

AS there ever been a period since Independence in which the characteristics of prompt decision solely on merits in regard to both policies and cases at all levels; speedy, full and proper implementation; and justice, neither delayed nor denied; have informed Government and its machinery?" said the smart young secretary to her neighbour in the queue at the bus-terminus, the thin-faced, bespectacled economic journalist, who for once had his eyes fixed on neither paper nor book and was looking appreciatively at the greenery in the garden beside him. "Eh, what profundities are these?" he asked. "Decisions on merits alone, prompt and proper implementation, and quick justice, all together, in India! Of course not. What makes you ask that question?" "Well, then, we haven't had good government at all, the three basic essentials for it have been missing, and still are, I presume. What do you think?" she asked looking towards the middle-aged, pleasant-faced political scientist two above her in the queue.

"Why, of course you're right," said the political scientist. "To put it in another way, the personal integrity of the ruler and the moral sense of the citizenry have both been at a very low ebb How then can you or anyone else expect good government? Nehru and his protected wrongdoing favourites, Indira utterly unscrupulous with her notorious caucus, Morarji with his tedious moralising and vaccilating action, you might as well expect good government from these as water from a stone. Take one small case. The Supreme Court decided the Special Court reference on the first December. Is the new bill ready? Has it been introduced in Parliament? No. Why not? The Law Minister and Ministry are in Delhi, the Home Ministry and Prime Minister (at present Home Minister too) are in Delhi, all the law officers of the State are in Delhi, and a short bill of a few sections takes all this time! Any old-style Member of Council would have said on the second, I want this Bill ready for the House by the sixth, and introduced at latest on the eighth. And so it would have happened. But we have wafflers now, and Heaven alone knows when the bill will come before the House, and how long Indira's trials will be held up because of lack of it. Justice delayed is justice denied, and you talk of justice informing the machinery of government! More likely it is that when justice appears at the doors of the authorities concerned, they make piteous moan, and say, Oh please, not today, no, no, kindly come another day."

"I agree with you generally," said the economic journalist, "but I would enter a caveat on behalf of Morarji. I do not think he comes anywhere near Nehru or Indira in the lack of integrity scale. The only thing you can urge against him is that he keeps his son Kanti, against whom there have been generalised allegations, with himself. It would of course have been much more sensible if on becoming Prime Minister, he had told Kanti to go and live apart from him, in Bombay or Pune or Ahmedabad for instance. How much trouble he, the Janata Party and the country would have been saved, if he had only accepted the advice he was begged to follow at that time. Why, there might have been no occasion even for Charan Singh's reference to Kanti in his letter to the Prime Minister, which led to the demand for his resignation; from which we are now very near a split in the Janata Party, to the greater profit and glory of Indira Oh Morarji, Morarji, what a mess you have made with your obstinacy!"

"Be that as it may," said a luxuriously-moustached, white-haired, khadi-clad old gentleman, "I would not have you forget your own part in the general debacle. Where today is the moral sense of the citizenry? Nowhere is it visible, but its absence is very clear in the lacs upon lacs paid in black for high-rise apartments, foreign cars, etc., etc., in the demands for solatiums by public servants engaged upon their normal duties, in the conduct of almost everybody in authority, from the trade union leadership to the influential in academic institutions. When all are for themselves alone, it might be asked, then who is for the country? No, good government there is not, nor can it be expected, unless once again a sense of the public interest animates at least the elite in all spheres."

"What amazes me is the way officials—protected, guaranteed officials crumpled up in the Indira regime," said a well-dressed, handsome young lady "I said to a distant cousin of mine, 'look nobody can dismiss you, at most you will be transferred or sent on involuntary leave. Why do you put people into jail under MISA? Say no, there isn't enough evidence, I am not satisfied'. His answer was a wry smile. 'You don't understand,' ne said, 'supposing the present regime continues for let us say the next ten years, where will I be if I have offended it? Prudence, dear cousin, just ordinary prudence.' I told him he was a miserable coward, but he didn't even blush." "I'm not surprised," said the old gentleman. "It's our Indian character. Very few of us Indians have standards of our own, and even of those who have, still fewer live by them. Most of us accept willingly the standards of those above us. When their normal behaviour is arbitrary or rascally, when they want evil things done, how can we hold back? We must be more loyal than the queen. Hence all the official excesses. In theory, of course, the official and the minister are not servant and master. They are both servants of the people of India. colleagues in the common cause. They all stand on a ladder of subordination, the Prime Minister on the second rung, the Secretary to government on say the tenth or fifteenth and so on to the fourth class servant at

the bottom. The law and rules lay down the duties of each, and so long as a man does his duty; he should not be nervous. In practice, even apart from the emergency, this does not work, largely owing to the lack of character on both sides. Sad, but what will you? The glory of officialdom, independent thinking and impartiality, the hall-marks of the good public servant, no longer appear on most present-day officials. In their place are inscribed Ji Huzoor, Jo Hukm, Bar Sar-o-Chasm. Part of the failure of moral sense in the citizenry, I suppose."

"Let me put to you another idea, it came to me specially in the context of the unwillingness to take action against Indira of the top leadership all these twenty months. No one can say they have been in the least eager. Even in this last privileges business it has been the followers who have compelled the leaders. Can it be the nature of our common belief that accounts for this tenderness? I can only put it crudely, not with all the beautiful philosophical language that generally accompanies it. The aim of life with us is self-realisation. This means perceiving the unity of all things, realising that the 'being' that is in you is the same as in all other persons and things, including of course Indira. If then she is part of the same being as yourself, can you really be enthusiastic about seeing her punished? Not this or that, as the saying is, but this and that. Nor need this be confined to the Prime Minister. Perhaps our general inclination to tolerate evil instead of condemning it forthrightly and pressing hard for its abolition also arises from the same belief of the universal being. It's only a suggestion. Think it over. Ah, here comes the bus." They were soon in their respective seats in the bus and it started with a jerk, throwing them all forward.

### ALAS FOR AMERICA

PRESIDENT Carter has shown that he belongs to the breed of which it was said:

A merciful Providence fashioned them hollow In order that they might their promises swallow.

Utterly disgraceful has been his conduct in regard to Taiwan. Solemn promises broken, solemn treaty obligations unilaterally abrogated! A small country, a loyal friend, sold down the river most cynically! And this man talks continually of morality and human rights. What a specimen, hyprocrisy incarnate!

That the Government of India should have rushed forward to welcome the Sino-American deal does it little credit. It was not called upon to express any opinion in regard to it, and that it should go out of its way to approve this horse-trading is certainly not in accord with the high moral principles its representatives proclaim.

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

2nd JANUARY 1979

No. 36

#### **MONOLOGUE**

(Time: 0.05 A.M. 1st January 1979)

EW YEAR resolutions? Of course, I have several. But here's one which covers them all. In 1979, my lies shall be bigger, better and more plausible even than in the period from June 1975 to today. I shall excel myself in mendacity. Champion liar of India, I undoubtedly am. Would I have been what I am now in this year, Leader of the main Opposition party in the country, free to take any action I think fit—and that after the elections debacle of 1977—had I stinted in mendacity? Of course not. I lied and lied and lied until they, my opponents, were blue in the face trying to catch up with my lies, and finally took refuge in a feeble, oh you know she lies. Bah, they say I'm no scholar, but I know well enough the learned maxim about the lie having travelled three leagues over the country, while truth is still fumbling with its boots, getting ready to pursue it. But in this year, I shall reach the zenith in this very difficult, very skilful art. People of much experience in many lands will acclaim me as I move on to be the champion liar of the world. With a barrage the like of which can hardly ever have been seen, I shall just sweep those opposed to me off the ground, make them fodder for the scrap-heap, walk over them to my goal of absolute power.

Oh, the strength of the lie you haven't seen yet, my friends. I have contented myself upto now with using it to get on my side the interested, the neutral, the indifferent. What she says so often and forcibly cannot be totally false, oh, no, there's a great deal of truth in her side of things. From which most of them go on to become my firm adherents, even my enthusiastic advocates. (Thank God, I'm well-blessed with monetary resources. Helps a lot, especially with the lukewarm) Now my campaign will be primarily directed to my firm opponents. They must be won over until they forget the difference between my lies and the truth, or if they still continue to see it, express themselves with great moderation about it. What's that phrase, damning with faint praise, no the opposite of that, confirming with faint condemnation. Ah yes, that's what we'll have, my countrymen, at the worst, and that'll soon be lost in the rushing torrent of acclaim from the many supporters my artistic, measured, plausible lies will have won me. A lie for every time, fitting and compact or diffuse as the occasion demands, you will have, oh people, to move you on to make me your sole sovereign mistress. The thoughts of youth they say are long, long thoughts, but I'm not young in my early sixties, and my thoughts are proximate, very likely to blossom within a year, perhaps two.

Ah yes, I cannot wait too long. Look at what they're doing to my poor young son. Why they might even land him in jail for quite a time, if they make him responsible for all the technicalities in company matters. What should the poor lamb know about such things? A free-spirited, generously-disposed electrifying spark, why bother him? Would they put on the back of a delicate deer the burden an ox normally carries? No, no, the only way out is quickly to power; therein alone lies safety for mine, and even me. However much all the leaders may be inclined to deal with me lightly, their followers, the rabble, are not satisfied. For a hundred thousand or so jailed by me, they would jail me; dear God, not even recognising what order of mortal I am, what sacrifices I have made to serve the country and them. Ungrateful wretches they are, but they'll soon sing a different tune, once I'm back, or even well on the way to being back. Ah yes, I know them.

This Charansingh-Morarji affair gives me quite an opportunity too. True not many M.P.s will leave the Janata with Charansingh, but there's no doubt about his hold on the rural voters of North and East India. Thank God, his amour propre has been so hurt, and Morarji is the obstinate, stiff-necked martinet he is! They are not likely to come to an agreement, and I, with my lies, half-lies, and offers of help to Charansingh, will certainly keep the cauldron boiling. Neither the Jat nor the Gujarati are any match in intrigue or innuendo for my vast experienced skill. So we'll have some fun. I said at the very beginning the Janata wouldn't hold together for more than a year or two. Now wasn't I right? Hurrah, then, for that very potent weapon, the lie, and Hurrah too for its proper wielder, myself. We are both on the way to victory, be assured. By the next new year we may have attained it; if not, we will at least have advanced a great deal towards it. Back me, I shall back you, will be my slogan to the masses in public; to the classes, in private; to intellectuals and friendly journalists at the top ranges, in secret. To the few obstinately rigid, I shall make no overtures. Their turn will come later, let them be sure; then they will have ample opportunity for repenting at leisure.

You know, I'm not completely selfish in all this. My family, myself, their well-being is certainly very important to me. Why, let me be frank and say, paramount to me. But, I also do believe I can manage the country better than the present ditherers, or indeed, than any other Indian. I was born to rule. I have the true ruler's charisma, and no one else in India has. I have also somewhat more than my fair share of —no harm in admitting it in the privacy of my own chamber—womanly charm, and am quite expert in knowing how and where exactly to apply it. Do you think I could have managed to stay out of prison in the period following on the election defeat, when memories of the emergency were quite fresh, if I had been just a female lump? I employed the gifts I had been endowed with by Nature and the skills and knowledge my experience had given me on all the men, political, governmental, saintly, religious that mattered, and always, I think, to my own advantage. So, well-equipped on every side, I face the new year with confidence. It will

be good to me, will 1979 the first half-hour of which is almost over. Now no more tarrying." Rising from the dressing-table, she dropped her dressing-gown on the chair next to her bed, and crept in below the rezais that kept the cold winter night at bay.

#### COMMENT

"Mrs. Gandhi's imprisonment and expulsion from the Indian Parliament is, if anything, a mild and almost technical punishment in comparison with her crimes and offences against democracy. Her imprisonment is likely to be brief—the equivalent almost of a comfortable spell in the Clock Tower for interrupting parliamentary proceedings. Indeed, the specific offence which persuaded the Indian Lok Sabha to impose these sentences was a breach of parliamentary privilege. Nor can Mrs. Gandhi argue convincingly that she is a political martyr. The vote that expelled her by a large majority was a free one that cut across party lines.

Compare this restrained chastisement with the ruthless actions of Mrs. Gandhi in power. Among much else, the Shah Commission found that she had called the state of emergency to avoid her own dismissal and disqualification for corrupt electoral practices; that she gave State and local officials almost unlimited powers of arrest and detention; that detainees, who ran into tens of thousands, were sometimes brutally assaulted; and that she introduced Press censorship, intimidation of the judiciary, harassment of opponents and—most horrifying of all—compulsory sterilisation. No doubt the present Indian Government has refrained from initiating a major State trial, with the prospect of severe penalties, partly because of a wish to avoid the disturbances and upheavals which it might stimulate. Even Parliament's very measured punishment has provoked riots in which perhaps a dozen people have died. But it was surely proper that the Indian Parliament should express some official disapproval of the power maniac who abolished Indian democracy, if only temporarily."

Courtesy: Daily Telegraph, 22nd Dec. 1978

. .

Governments exist to do that for their peoples which the peoples cannot do for themselves, was the old belief. But no longer. Nowadays, governments exist to do for their peoples what the people can do very well for themselves. So Mr. Kaushik goes on building hotels, Messers Patnaik and Fernandes press for nationalisation of industries, without bothering at all whether or not they can be, or are being run, by the people, members of the public acting on their own. Government hotels show a loss, while privately-run hotels make a handsome profit. But that in Delhi is beside the point. So, too, the facts that some of the concerns proposed for nationalisation are very well-run, pay good wages, give adequate profits and serve the public interest well, are no longer relevant. What seems to animate governmental thinking is plain, simple envy. Why should private individuals excercise the power and enjoy

the facilities that the running of large concerns gives them? And the patronage? Oh, no, it simply cannot be borne. And it's no use our just having a finger in the pie through rules and regulations and representatives on boards. No, the whole pie for us, nothing else will do. And if the crust we turn out is not as light and flaky as in the past, and the inside is not even half as tasty, why that has to be put up with patiently as a result of public ownership.

Remember the sacred words public enterprise do not excuse wastage, inefficiency and worse. That public enterprises can be run quite as efficiently and economically as the best private enterprises is true. That they are generally not so run is also true. Accordingly in this matter the public interest is best served by the maxim, discretion is the better part of valour. Nationalise only when you must; otherwise leave good or fair alone. Discharge your existing responsibilities adequately and you will have done well, hard-working Ministers all.

#### SUBTERRANEAN

Trying to begin again; but this memory with a long nose, pushes its way in untimely, unwanted. Do you imagine a day when we will meet standing in a queue, or stepping over puddles on a street corner? And quietly, without a flicker we will find the flame blown out and the wax cools, spreads, hardens on the surface.

-Revathy Gopal

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## OPINION

vol. XIX

9th JANUARY 1979

No. 37

#### **ABOUT OURSELVES**

In this, the second week of 1979, Opinion wishes all its readers a year of performance. Interesting, Prosperous, Happy, may that be its character for all of them. The Editor specially thanks all those who have sent encouraging messages throughout the year and during the recent festive season.

Of late many readers have been enquiring when their subscriptions expire, and suggesting that some method be adopted of informing them and others in this respect, so that they might pay their dues and arrange for renewal. For their benefit is reproduced the article below, first published in the issue of January 23, 1973:

#### SUBSCRIPTIONS

A man over seventy-two should cease troubling about the collection of the annual subscription of the weekly he conducts. Accordingly, from the 1st February 1973, I shall abandon the methods used up to now to remind subscribers of their dues. Many, of course, need no reminder at all, their subscriptions being paid in as soon as they fall due or even before. No more will the rest be faced with the number of the month on the address-slip, the short notice in dark letters at the end of the issue. the V.Ps. The payment of the subscription will be entitlely up to them. They may send it in as and when they like. And if some say, 'But we don't remember the month in which we should pay', the answer is 'The month doesn't really matter. Two rupees you have to pay once a year. Send them in whenever you choose. For your own convenience and better remembrance, you may wish to fix the date by any of our great holidays, the two National Days, Independence and Republic, New Year's Day, Holi, Jamshedi Navroz, Bakri Id, Diwali, Dassera, Christmas or any other. Let the despatch of Opinion's subscription be a part of your celebrations, if it so please you.

I do not propose to remove the subscriber's name from the list if the subscription is not paid. Who knows he or she may be moved of his or her own accord to send it in with next year's or the year after's. An esteemed reader of some years' standing whose name was removed recently because of the non-acceptance of a V.P. by his people, objected very strongly to being deprived of what he was pleased to call 'the feast of reason and the flow of soul that every issue of *Opinion* is.' And he

added, 'once the exceptionly onerous task of educating the educated has been undertaken, the non-payment of two, of for that matter twenty rupees, must surely not be allowed to bring it to a stop'. (He accompanied his protest with a ten-rupee note to cover the dues for the past year and the next four.) There is much to be said for his point of view, and I propose to act upon it. To serve the Indian People is after all the sole purpose of *Opinion*'s existence.

Quite a number of readers counsel raising the subscription. Two rupees a year, they say, is ridiculous; let it be at least twelve a year,; willingly shall we pay it. To them my thanks for their good-will and estimate of the value of Opinion. Were I starting the weekly now, making of it a truly professional publication, setting aside a lump sum as capital for it, I would very probably accept their counsel. But Opinion has just 'growd up' as it liked, its objective being the supply of that "sound comment" so rare in this country, with such means as were within the capacity of its proprietor-publisher-editor, etc., to office-boy on occasion. And now it is eighteen years and thirty-six weeks old and your servant, seventy-eight and a month. So let things rest as they are in this matter, good friends. It does the country no harm to have just one item cost in 1979 what it did in 1960. And even the most stringent cost-conscious economist or accountant need have no fear its example will set a trend.

-A. D. G.

It is usual among Indira-admirers, political and journalistic, to talk of the pre-emergency Indira prime ministership almost as an age of Gold. As a corrective, see the article below, first published on July 31, 1973:

#### LACKING INTEGRITY, THOU LACKEST ALL

Indira Gandhi wants advice. She wants it from Opposition leaders, Great are my difficulties, the country's difficulties, in the economic sphere, she says; Tell me, oh tell me, what should I do; I long to hear you, so do not hesitate to say what you think.

This writer has for over twenty-three years been the Indian Republic's Most Loyal Unofficial Opposition, and has not in that capacity hesitated to thrust his views about affairs, governmental and other, upon those in power week after week. High authority has strongly disapproved of him, but God's mercy would seem not to have been turned away from him. So now that Indira is actually seeking advice, though certainly not from him, he as usual volunteers the measure that in his view she would find most effective in the solution of all the problems that confront her.

He would say to her, "become honest Prime Minister". And if that seemed too cryptic, he would clarify "Give up the dishonesty and corruption, material as well as intellectual, that have in your regime, made such a shambles of government, administration, order, economy, production, distribution, exchange, and the ordinary life of the ordinary



person. For God's sake and the country's, learn to see things as they are, setting aside prejudice and predilection, and then, putting away self or sectional interest, decide and act on the merits of each matter. Once you become honest, you will find not much difficulty in obtaining honest coadjutors, and the whole tone and temper not only of your government, but of the entire country, will improve surprisingly. Many of the things that seem to you problems will just disappear, and those that remain you will be able to tackle far more easily than you think possible now. Dishonesty blinds, Prime Minister, honesty gives clearer sight, and what is more valuable than such sight in dealing with complicated and distorted people and situations?

"Integrity then, Prime Minister, make integrity your immediate and paramount objective. Know well that the sooner you attain it, the sooner will all the rest that is desirable be added to it. The personal integrity of the ruler is the key to good government and the welfare of the people, said the ancients, and truly that is so even to-day any honest man of ample experience will tell you. Indira the Honest, is that not a sobriquet worth striving for? Or do you prefer the ones applied to you at present, Indira the False, Indira the Untrustworthy, Indira the Corrupt? You may gnash your teeth in anger at such 'impertinence', or tear your lace-handkerchief to tatters in a rage, but remember no other prescription is likely to be as effective against the multiple maladies from which you say you suffer. God's grace be upon you and may you let it lead you aright, for your own sake and for the sake of all the people!"

"Does the Indian resent the American because he is white? Quite emphatically, no. He may condemn some Americans for their treatment of the black, for falling away from the obvious implications of their own high declaration about the equality of man, but the colour of the American skin does not otherwise affect his judgment or feeling. Does he resent Americans because they are rich? No certainly not. Accustomed to live in a society in which only a very few are rich, and most are very poor, the Indian does not envy riches. He does not think to be poor or rich is either a sin or a virtue. He is not ashamed of being either, though occasionally he may consider it wrong for the rich not to help

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## OPINION

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#### INQUIRY INTO CHARGES AGAINST MR. KANTI DESAI

#### A. G. NOORANI

O N August 10, 1978 the Rajya Sabha passed a resolution envisaging the appointment by its Chairman of a 15-member committee to go into allegations against the members of the families of, both, the Prime Minister, Mr. Morarji Desai, and the former Home Minister, Mr. Charan Singh. Referring to this motion, on August 24, Mr. Desai regretted the Government's inability to accept its recommendations. He, however, said, "In the event of any specific charges of corruption in the context of the resolution being made to it in writing by any hon'ble members since my government took office, Government proposes to refer the same to the Chief Justice for being examined by him."

The offer has not ended the controversy which has now reached the proportions of a crisis not only in the functioning of the Rajya Sabha but also in the ranks of the Janata Party. Mr. Desai's criticism of Mr. N. K. P. Salve's charges was justified in one important respect. They were quite different in content and format to the memorial containing charges against persons holding public office which we have known over the years, namely, a memorandum of specific charges, signed by the memorialists, made to the President or Prime Minister. Some of Mr. Salvi's charges were based admittedly on press reports and some on "information given to me by persons who would not like their names to be made public."

Under S. 3(1) of the Commission of Inquiry Act, 1952, a Commission can be set up "for the purpose of making an inquiry into any definite matter of public importance". Construing this expression, the Supreme Court observed in 1968 in the case of Mr. K. B. Sahay, a former Chief Minister of Bihar, that "if the charges were vague or speculative suggesting a fishing expedition we would have paused to consider whether such an inquiry should be allowed to proceed."

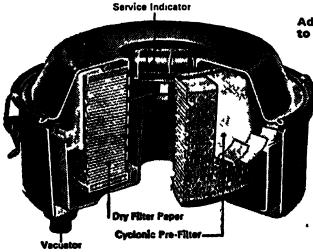


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Mr. Sahay's challenge was repelled but the appointment of a Commission of Inquiry is liable to challenge in a court of law, at the instance of the person whose conduct is sought to be investigated, on the ground that S. 3(1) of the Act is not complied with.

Mr. Desai has a point, therefore, when he argues, as he did on August 24, that "having regard to the fact that no specific instances of corruption have been referred to in the resolution, Government do not consider that it would be justified in appointing Commissions of Inquiry which can only be set up for making an inquiry into any 'definite matter of public importance'."

It necessarily follows from this, one would think that, once "specific instances" are alleged, a Commission of Inquiry would be appointed. But Mr. Desai refuses to follow the logical course. What he proposes, instead, is that, as quoted above, even if "specific charges" are made in writing they would be referred to the Chief Justice "for being examined by him."

The procedure Mr. Desai suggests is highly objectionable. It would expose the Chief Justice to the embarrassment of a proceeding devoid of legal authority. He will have no power to administer oath, summon witnesses or requisition records. In sum, he cannot "ask that man (the accuser) to give him prima facie evidence" as Mr. Desai said he could, in the Lok Sabha on December 23, 1978. The Royal Commission on Tribunals of Inquiry, headed by Lord Justice Salmon, characterised the Denning Inquiry as "a brilliant exception". But it said emphatically that "no Government in the future should ever in any circumstances whatever set up a tribunal of the type adopted in the Profumo case to investigate any matter causing nation-wide public concern. For the reasons we have stated, we are satisfied that such a method of inquiry is inferior to, and certainly no acceptable substitute for, an inquiry under the Tribunals of Inquiry (Evidence) Act of 1921." Our Commissions of Inquiry Act, 1952 is modelled on that statute.

Once specific charges are preferred, they should be referred to a Commission of Inquiry if they are grave enough and public opinion demands a probe. Undoubtedly over the years the practice has grown up of verifying the charges to consider whether a prima facie case exists to warrant the setting up of a Commission of Inquiry. It must be emphasised that this is only a rule of prudence. It is certainly not a legal requirement. Tribunals have been set up in England and Commissions in India despite the fact that the authorities establishing them felt that the charges, were altogether groundless. But the course was adopted, nonetheless, because they felt that they were accountable to the people and their doubts could be dispelled only by an independent inquiry. As Mr. Jawaharlal Nehru wrote to the President, in his note on the Kairon affair dated October 25, 1963, "Normally, only charges which have some prima facie substance in them should be subjected to a regular inquiry. In the present case, I am not in a position to say that these charges have prima facie substance in them. Nevertheless, since they have been made to our

President and they have been repeated often in the Press and platform, I think an inquiry is desirable." These remarks would apply with greater force to specific charges in the case of Mr. Kanti Desai for there has been much discussion in Parliament as well. In the past, generally the Prime Minister considered the prima facie worth of the charges. Mrs. Indira Gandhi misused this. In the instant case Mr. Morarji Desai cannot be judge in his own son's cause. Nor can be invoke the aid of the Chief Justice of India. Indeed, having regard to the gravity of the matter be ought to follow Mr. Nehru's precedent and appoint a Commission regardless of whether a prima facie case exists or not.

The fact that the charges concern the Prime Minister's son only strengthens the case for an inquiry. In this context the Salmon mission's observations are very apt. "It is essential that on the very pure occasions when crises of public confidence occur, the evil, if it exists, shall be exposed so that it may be rooted out, or if it does not exist, public shall be satisfied that in reality there is no substance in the prevalent rumours and suspicions by which they have been disturbed. We are satisfied that this would be difficult, if not impossible, without public investigation by an inquisitorial Tribunal possessing the powers conferred by the Act of 1921" (on which our Act of 1952 is based). The logic is unanswerable.

In the case of Mr. Kanti Desai, the "crisis of confidence" is there for all to see. Mr. L. K. Advani's resignation also is proof enough.

It would be invidious for the Prime Minister to claim that these precedents do not apply in the case of his son and a special procedure should be followed of asking no less a judge than the Chief Justice of India to verify the charges only to "ask that man (the accuser) to give him prima facie evidence. If he does not do it, then he can be sued by my son for defamation". Mr. Desai's son will not be deprived of that remedy if the specific charges are referred to a Commission of Inquiry straightaway.

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## OPINION

bi. XIX

23rd JANUARY 1979

No. 39

#### THE PUBLIC VOICE

66 THANK GOD," exclaimed the thin-faced, bespectacled economic journalist, looking up from his newspaper as he stood in the queue at the bus-terminus. "Why this most pious fervency?" inquired the smart young lady secretary, his neighbour in the line. "Well, two things," he said "both very good, the resolution of the very tough Charansingh problem, and the discovery that driven to the point old Morarjibhai is not so besottedly obstinate as to ruin everything. By Shiva, I'm feeling quite cheerful. Now the Janata will probably last at least up to the next elections, which seemed hardly likely a short time ago with Charansingh so disgruntled and Indira so cleverly spreading out her lures for him, making quite a play in fact. You know in this land of ours you have to give it to the old. Jayaprakash and Acharya, they did the trick, I think. Long they tried, often hesitantly, but in the end, their good sense, persuasive ability and pointing out of real, living danger, seem to have melted Morarji's wrong-headed persistence and soothed Charansingh's sorely wounded amour propre. Not that everything will be easy now; they may sniff at one another for quite a time like strange dogs, but who knows, it may also be a case of the rift within the lute, which afterwards makes the music sound all the sweeter."

"You are quite right," said the pleasant-faced, middle-aged lady political scientist. "It was the most important problem that had risen in these last twenty-two months, and the fact that it was so intensely personal made it all the more difficult to overcome. Two old and experienced men behaving like children, and nobody to give them a thrashing and make them behave, why states have been ruined on account of such rivalry. If indeed, there has been an amicable settlement, as this paper says, I join in your thanks to Providence. The country's in a parlous state anyway, and the first condition for improvement is unity in the ruling party. Take the bankmen's agitation for instance, which has been making life so difficult for so many. Take industrial relations, in which law and order have been victims for quite a time. How can any government deal with these and the like effectively when it has handicapped itself severely by party infighting? Let's hope things will be better now, problems dealt with expeditiously, or even dealt with before they become problems."

"I shouldn't expect too much. What has been running on for years cannot be settled in a trice even by the most efficient, and my experience

of Government at various levels shows generally a low order of efficiency. I say nothing at all about honesty; that varies with individuals. Also don't forget there's a whole political movement, with a vested interest in disorder, agitation, making the worse appear the better reason, all with a view to discredit the Janata Government and Party, to the greater Take the recent wholly dastardly attack on a very decent industrialist and the members of his family in our own city. This man is known to belong to a firm of very good and sympathetic employers, who pay excellent wages, and give their workmen ample facilities. he is viciously stabbed and so are two members of his family. Thank God he is said to be very slowly recovering. That he and they may soon be restored to their full strength will be the sincere prayer not only of his friends and acquaintances, but of all good citizens. It hasn't yet been made public who the miscreants were or what, but would it surprise anyone very much to learn that this was not just an industrial crime, that behind it were not merely personal grudge or inter-union rivalry, but that it perhaps had a political aspect, too. The Janata Government has not on the whole been too popular with big or even middle business. By showing that in its regime, even the most irreproachable industrialist is not safe and can be so attacked in his own house, may not the rift between business and Government be so widened as to be irreparable, business be so alienated as to throw its whole weight into the other scale? Of course the stupid pronouncements re. nationalisation etc., of some Ministers have given enough ground for passive dislike by business, nay by any owner even of small holdings in shares or other negotiable property. All the more reason for turning this dislike into active opposition to government by such a stroke, into passionate partisanship for itself, wouldn't you say?"

"You make out a case; that is all I would say, but I wouldn't commit myself at this stage to your theory. Let the investigators investigate. Let us hope they find out all about the assailants and their background, and then it will be time enough to decide," said a luxuriously-moustached, white-haired, khadi-clad old gentleman, leaning on his umbrella. "I will concede to you though the existence of a political movement that might well have adopted as its motto 'Evil, be thou my Good,' in its fight for the safety and rise to power of its leader and her son. As to the Janata Government, it must not only govern but must be seen to govern. man he was and just; in his days no man dared harm another.' they said of an ancient ruler, and in later, more degenerate, days the people longed for him. So, too, the Janata must realise that in its very desirable, very open style of government, it has not been careful enough to restore that invaluable quality which can best be described by the word hukumat, the essential awe of government, which made all citizens respect it and in large part, work with it. This it was that often in the twenties and thirties enabled peace and order to be preserved in a taluka with fourteen policemen, two head constables and a sub-inspector. After Independence, the police budgets and the police strength increased enormously; yet an element of hukumat remained, wherever the character of the officials and the politicians justified it. In many places both were deplorable, and

hukumat perished, the last blow having been delivered by Indiraji and her Emergency, bred in lies and managed by lies. To coax back hukumat into the governmental system, to win back so to speak respect for authority, the Janata rulers must have, and must exhibit, personal integrity in all their dealings. Once this has become the rule, the students will no longer set fire to buses, the bank clerks and air line operatives will very rarely work to rule, and despite the inherent impersonality of large organisation, the human face and values will triumph."

"I see," said a handsome young lady in a kaftan and embroidered silk slippers "that you take everything ultimately to the moral issue. Government, you would, I suppose, consider the application of personal morality to the plane of the state. But, I know in fact, and I suspect you do too, that personal morality plays very little part on the state level. There the determining factor is almost always personal interest. Now, don't look at me so quizzically, you know it is so, and you know you can't alter it. So what is the good of feeding us up with all this fine guff about the personal integrity of the ruler? What matters in reality is his strength, his skill in maneouvring, his capacity to deceive, his hypocrisy, his charisma."

"I am afraid," said the economic journalist, "you are both right and wrong, right in the short term, wrong in the long. Take our own Indira; she had all the characteristics you mention. She flourished through their exercise for quite a time, but where did she end? In the soup. I would agree with you that with the aid of these qualities and the deplorable weakness of the Janata top leadership, which is still only talking of trying her at the end of twenty-two months, she has got out of the soup considerably, and may well even attempt to triumph again. But she need never have been in the soup at all, had she exercised, even after attaining power, simple personal integrity, not given way to the nepotism and lying that destroyed her finally. Take the Shah of Iran. What turned the people ultimately against him? Corruption and nepotism. Had he been totally disinterested personally, for himself as for his relatives, he could have sustained even his autocracy. The Iranians are well accustomed to absolutism. But an absolute monarch who lives for his people is one thing; one who lives for his and his family's benefit first is another. So where is he? Again, in the soup. For politicians and monarchs there is no better rule than the simple:

> Be good, dear child, And let who will do evil. His end is bad And you will live to see it.

Not good verse, nor even verse, but sound sense. Well, here comes the bus." After it had discharged its incoming passengers, our friends all trooped in and took their window seats.

#### COMMENT

Morarji is reported to have said recently in the South that while there was no legal sanction behind Hindi, an Indian to be patriotic must know or learn Hindi. Which Hindi, friend Morarji? The Hindi of all-India radio, of the Government's advisory committee on Hindi, of Mahatma Gandhi's common Hindustani, of the ordinary cinema and film? But quite apart from that, why this juxtaposition of patriotism with language? Many a soldier has died for India, many an inventor or scientist has discovered or is discovering for India, many a poet has written for India, to whom Hindi was, and is, almost as great a mystery as Greek. Therefore, they were and are unpatriotic, according to Morarji! What absurdity! Patriotism is a feeling of the soul, an emotion akin to love. You love your mother not because you know the language she talks. but because she is your mother. Your beloved does not cease to be your beloved, because you do not know her language. It is one thing to say it would be convenient for all Indians to know Hindi, the simplest Hindustani preferably; quite another to make proficiency in Hindi, preferably All-India Radio's at its most sanskritised, a touch-stone for patriotism. And saying this, Morarji would have the South believe that he and his friends are not in favour of forcing Hindi down its throat. Their view of its gullibility is incredible. No wonder it systematically votes against them!

"It is a shameful and unseemly thing to think one thing and speak another, but how odious to write one thing and think another."

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## OFINION

ol. XIX

**30th JANUARY 1979** 

No 40

#### WHO LOSES?

W E needs must love the highest when we see it, says the poet. Which means, speaking in less exalted terms, that the best of any genre must inspire at least special consideration. In this country, the line more often than not should read: We needs must break the highest when we see it. Which means the best of any genre irritates us so much that we just cannot abide it and must prevent it from carrying out its function, or at the least, cause it to alter its activity.

Once in a very, very long while, Providence blessed us with a Finance Minister of world class, a man any honest cabinet in the world would have been glad to have in-charge of the country's finances, any exchaquer in the world would have been proud to have at its head. He understood finance, he understood administration, he understood money, he understood agriculture, he understood industry, he understood commerce and trade, he understood world conditions and the abiding interests of nations, he understood the ways and thinking of his own countrymen and of their He was exceptionally hard-working. He listened various sections. patiently to conflicting views and was able generally to bring their holders to an agreed consensus. His behaviour was invariably dignified. His technique in his own subject was admirable. He attained many successes to the good of the people of the country, easing their lives in a number of ways, and achieved even the near-miracle of no inflation despite massive deficit financing. All this he did as a matter of course, without any publicity or fanfare. He was one of those very few men of little showing, whom a foreign poet of India urged should be blessed and praised. The work was the thing to him; that being well-done it mattered little whether anyone even noticed it favourably. He took as little account of the credit he might have gained from it as one might of the small nickel or copper coins that sometimes trickle through the chinks between one's fingers to the ground below.

And so, what did we of India do to him? Offered him up as a sacrifice on the altar of the Morarji-Charansing compromise. Prevented him from continuing with the work he was doing, from presenting in a month the Budget that might have set the seal on much he must have been thinking of. And this, why? Because according to the papers, Morarji would not

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have Charansingh back as Home Minister (Why? No information), and if so, Charansingh would not take any ministry except Finance. So for our man, as a pis aller, Home. Not that the Home Ministry is not an honourable estate. It is one of the most important departments of government, and particularly at the present time, will make a call on many of the former Finance Minister's noteworthy qualities. To him personally, regarding as he does the public interest as paramount, it may not matter very seriously. The loss primarily is the country's; pray God at may not turn out to be very grave!

#### SOME NUCLEAR FACTS

Q.: What do you think of the Indian Ocean as a nuclear free zone?

A.: As an aspiration, good. As a practicable proposition, poppy-cock.

Q.: Why?

A.: Who are the principal nuclear powers in the area? The U.S. and the U.S.S R., with bases galore and interests galore. Are either of them likely to abate their interests and their bases, leaving the advantage to the other? Of course not, more specially when the area is bursting with strife at present. Afghanistan practically a People's Democratic Republic, Iran with all oil supplies stopped, and you ask the U.S. to take its nuclear weapons out of the area. What, it asks, you want me to make a present of the whole ocean to the Russians? Think again or see a brain doctor. So, too the U.S. with Diego Garcia, and South Africa and Egypt and various other places on the African continent, you ask us to take our nuclear weapons out, do you, ask the Russians. Really, how can you be so naive? Do you not realise why there is peace on the ocean? Because we both have nuclear weapons, and know we have them, and so we dare not fight, lest we might be led on to use them. You ought to be grateful that is the position. Otherwise your Indian Ocean would by now have easily been an American or Russian lake. In your own interests leave things alone.

Q.: You said the principal nations having nuclear weapons here are the American and the Russian. Are there any others too?

A.: Well, there's Israel supposed to have about twenty hydrogen bombs by now; and there's South Africa with the same or more. Then of course there's China, by now ready with quite a number of intermediate range ballistic missiles and at least some intercontinental ones. It could certainly bomb most places in the Indian Ocean area, just as it could bomb Moscow or Kiev, and probably New York or Washington or San Francisco. And of course there's Pakistan crying itself hoarse to get the machinery to make nuclear bombs.

Q.: So what should be done?

A.: Stop asking the strong to make themselves weak. They won't

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TYRON?

do it, and if they did, who knows the less strong with weaker nuclear arsenals might be tempted to take advantage of a quick once for all strike? Say Israel on Riad and the Saudi Arabian oil fields, return the Arabs to their camels and stop their assistance to its inimical neighbours, or South Africa on the front-line black republics, and shatter once and for all their nuisance value.

- Q.: But what about us particularly? You know we have no nuclear bombs and we have made pronouncement on pronouncement saying we won't make them. And China has bombs in plenty and is swearing help to Pakistan over Kashmir, and it still has disputes over territory with us. So?
- A.: Well we missed the boat about the time the Chinese started their nuclear programme. We could have done as well as they, even better perhaps, according to some experts, but we took a policy decision against making the bomb and stuck to it, despite all the disadvantages so emphatically pointed out and so clearly obvious. We, our rulers, decided to commit nuclear-suicide, so to speak, so I suppose we shall live only until the Chinese, or the Pakistanis assisted by the Chinese, put us out of our misery. I remember on Republic Day listening over the radio to all the pomp and grandeur of military music, and the description of deadly weapons passing by in procession, and feeling there ought to have been a large placard at the head of the procession, before even the only mounted cavalry in the world—a true token of the uselessness of our defence forces -"By Benevolent Grace of the Noble Government and People of the Great Chinese Republic," for think what would have happened that morning if half an hour before the parade started the Chinese had from their Lop Nor and other rocket ranges loosed say twenty hydrogen bombs, one targeted on each of our cities from Calcutta to Amritsar. What a shambles it would have been, all our command centres being wiped out, and all the very large sums of money being spent annually on our defence establishment turning out to be utterly useless. All men and women are of course prisoners under sentence of death with an indefinite reprieve. For them the reprieve is at the will of God or nature, call it what you will. We have of our own free will chosen to hand over the power of reprieve to the rulers of our neighbour, the Immortal Celestial state. Strike all the attitudes our rulers and we may, these are the essential facts, and you can't get rid of them, unless among our thousands of scientists, on whose ever-growing numbers we pride ourselves so much, there are some who even at this late date can discover some antidote to the poision the nation has collectively taken, briefly something that will act as a deterrent to the Chinese, make them as wary of us as the Russians are of the Americans and vice versa. Sorry to depress you, oh great heir of our immortal spiritual heritage, but things are as they are and their consequences will be as they will be. You I'm sure would not have me equivocate. God's mercy be upon us all.

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#### SMALL IS BEAUTIFUL

#### GAURI DESHPANDE

1.

Small Joys

Some mornings you wake
Shot through with despair
Unable to face another day
Of the same grind;
Cooking, cleaning, washing, minding
The baby, ironing, running errands—
A happy thought intervenes:
Perhaps today you'll write a poem
Small, exact, to fit the last
Half page, and reading it the august
Editor will smile at your impatient face.

2.

Small Fry

It's absurd for any one to be three I feel, but she in her newness New dress, icecreams and cakes Tunks no end of herself and feels plainly:

It is absurd for any one to be sometally forty.

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## OPINION

lol. XIX

6th FEBRUARY 1979

No. 41

#### CALLAGHAN AND BRITAIN ON THE BRINK

#### TAYA ZINKIN

21-1-1979

T was not so very long ago that I wrote euphorically about Mr. L Callaghan's great nose for politics. I have for many years been an admirer of Sunny Jim, and it hurts me, no doubt more than it hurts him, to have had to reverse my opinion on his ability, perhaps not as a statesman, but certainly as a leader. I write this somewhat reluctantly, because it reminds me of one of the fables of La Fontaine, which I learnt at school in my youth. The fable was entitled 'The Donkey's Kick' and described how, after the great hon, king of the animal world, had got old, feeble, toothless and clawless, even a timid donkey came to kick his backside after all the greater and fiercer animals had hurled insult at the ailing despot. I am behaving like La Fontaine's donkey. But, Sunny Jim does, unlike the lion, whose ailments had been brought upon him not by himself but by the passing of time, deserve to be kicked. If one goes back in Labour history, one has to recognise that it was he who wrecked Barbara Castle's gallant attempt to curb the unions and that it was he who used his great leaverage to scuttle 'In Place of Strife'; not because this was in the nnational interest, for it clearly was not, but because it was in the interest of promoting Sunny Jim with the trade unions, at the national expense. Mr. Callaghan is not unique, of course, in putting self before the nation. Ted Heath, that disastrous Labour Prime Minister on the Conservative bench did something equally damaging to the national interest, when he passed legislation which made it possible for essential service staff, such as the electricians, to go on strike. Everybody who follows international news knows that Britain is in the grip of confrontation between workers and employers on a national scale. Even ambulance drivers, who have gone on strike have been preventing voluntary ambulances and army ambulances from bringing casualties into hospitals; however, thank God the electricians are not on strike . . . yet. This confrontation is making a shambles of the whole of Sunny Jim's economic policy and destroying the sacrifices that he extracted from everybody over the past four years of making it.

I have, myself, said last time when I praised him that it was very patriotic of him not to go to the electorate before the winter, because it was obvious to everybody that this would be a winter of discontent, and that, being Labour leader, he was better equipped to deal with the trade

unions than anybody else in sight.

His responsibility for the present mess is at two levels: one level is a very fundamental one: I will come to it in a moment, the other is at a somewhat lower level, which has something to do with the gift that some people have, and that I wrongly thought he had, of sniffing where the wind is blowing from in order to take preventive action and deflect it from those who might be carried away. When Mr. Callaghan was in the Bahamas, undoubtedly dealing with world affairs, he showed an unusual lack of flair. We, in England, were in the grip of the ice age with shortages and strikes greater than Mount Everest itself looming over the horizon. To come back to England with a broad smile for every televisios viewer to see, and to announce that there was no crisis and that he was in touch and that only 'jealousy' could motivate his critics, was, putting it bluntly, waving a red rag to a very angry bull. Indeed, over the past few months Mr. Callaghan has shown a considerable degree of intuitional constipation. His main raisos d'être where he is, c.g., Prime Minister is that, being a trade union man risen from the ranks, he knows everything there is to know about trade unions. He has completely lost touch with the trade unions, not only with the leadership, but with the rank and file. This is clearly shown by the way in which, even when he manages to knock some sense into the leadership, the leadership has no sway over its members. There are endless examples where the members settled disputes against the advice of their leaders, and endless examples of the other way round, like when the ambulance drivers refused to take emergency calls after their leaders had assured they would, or when flying pickets disrupt industry against the expressly issued instructions of their leaders, or when the two railway trade unions indulge in a hide-and-seek match around the negotiating table at the expense of the railway users.

Everything that is happening in this country shows that the time has come for politicians to stop politicking and for men of good will to lead. It was indeed extraordinary to hear Mr. Dennis Healey, the Chancellor of the Exchequer, whose policies, budgets, threats, taxes, etc., are smashed into smitherines by Mr. Callaghan's failure to avoid, or to deal with, the confrontation, say publicly that it was Mrs. Margaret Thatcher, when she appeared on television in an unscheduled appeal to the nation, who spoke the voice of reason and said what the silent—alas—majority wanted to hear. What Mrs. Thatcher said was that the time had come to put politics aside and that she and her party would back the Government in any legislation required to restore the sovereignty of Parliament, to come to grips with trade unions by making secondary picketing illegal, by introducing secret ballot and free postal voting, for which the country would pay, that closed shop should be made illegal and that unofficial strikers should not get social benefits.

'Sunny,' no more, Jim, is now facing a situation in which even Healey is on the other side. To make matters worse, is addition to a one day strike of low paid workers all over Britain, followed by a one day railway strike, twice a week, which is going to be repeated like all

the other strikes, the weather is again against him As I write London commuters, paralysed by the railway strike, are also paralysed by a snow storm with icy roads, the underground system grinding to a halt by frost combined with the inability of some staff to report for duty; meanwhile the airports are closed, some of them by snow and or strike action, as in the North and the Midlands and Scotland Others, like Heathrow, by the astounding fact that for Great Britain's major international and national airport there is only one snow plough. The discontent of people whether they be low paid or high paid—and therefore high taxed—or be they tourists stranded is mounting rapidly. Nobody today in England, can feel in a sunny mood. The election is round the coinci, exactly when it is difficult to say, but things cannot go on like this for much longer and when the crunch comes, my guess is that Mrs Thatcher will get the kind of response from the nation that the nation gave after the General Strike in 1926 and the Depression. I would be very surprised if Mr. Callaghan had bargained for that when he decided not to have an election a short while ago. But perhaps he did and I am unfair to think he is not the great patriot I believed him to be.

[The British scene provides quite a number of lessons for us too, with our burgeoning trade union movement both in the public and private sectors, and the growing tendency in labour agitation to hold the country to ransom by most seriously hurting the ordinary consumer of goods and services. That the worker has rights, no decent citizen would hesitate to acknowledge. That he also has duties, no decent worker would hesitate to admit. It is best therefore that industrial relations be regulated by legislation. We have a bill pending in Parliament, which takes account of most of the points mentioned by Mrs Thatcher, according to the article above, and it is to be hoped that measure, after necessary discussion and amendment, will soon reach the statute book in the interest not only of the worker and the employer, but of the country as a whole.—Editor.1

#### VIEW

S. H. Belavadi: My purpose on writing these few lines is not so much to discuss the merits or otherwise of the Kanti Desai matter, as the manner and method of raising this issue in the Rajya Sabha. The discussion of this matter in Opinion (16-1-1979) comes in the context of the Rajya Sabha resolution, for the appointment of a Committee of the House by the Chairman, to make the enquiry. Evidently the passing of such a resolution, backed by the threatened resignation of Shri L. K. Advani, the leader of Rajya Sabha and the Minister for Information and Broadcasting, is regarded as evidence of public opinion demanding a probe. This, I am afraid, is incorrect. The Rajya Sabha, as composed today, is a political body dominated by the Opposition. It is under the Constitution the representative of the States, its members, except the nominated ones, being elected by the various State Assemblies. These Assemblies have since

been dissolved and replaced by new Assemblies. Many of the present members of the Rajya Sabha have been elected by State Assemblies which so longer exist. In the circumstances, it would be difficult to maintain that the resolution passed by such a body, can be regarded as sufficient evidence of public opinion demanding a probe. The reasons of Shri Advani's resignation, were, I think, different too. The furore which was created in the Rajya Sabha, day after day, over the issue, making it impossible for the House to transact business, was probably responsible for his threatened resignation, out of sheer desperation.

Apart from this, there is a more vital reason why such a resolution cannot be accepted by Government. Under the Commission of Act 1952, only a resolution by the Lok Sabha is binding on Govern The Rajya Sabha is deliberately excluded, its opinion not being considered sufficient to bind Government. In these circumstances, it seems that steps were taken to move a resolution to appoint a Committee of the House, instead of a Commission of Enquiry under the Act. In my view, even the admission of such a notice would not be free from objection, seeing the legal provisions in the Act, which by necessary implication excludes the Rajya Sabha in this respect. To demand implementation of such a resolution makes the matter more untenable. Government should have strongly objected to the admission of the resolution on the grounds mentioned above and if, despite that, the resolution was tabled, discussed and passed, it should have told the Rajya Sabha, in no uncertain terms that it cannot regard itself as bound by the resolution, a course justified under the law and the Constitution. Conversely an august body like the Rajya Sabha might hardly have cared to pass such a resolution if its implications were already clearly brought out. Instead; Government wavered and allowed the situation to develop upto a point where it became difficult to control. This could have been avoided, if a clear cut position had been taken up firmly from the very beginning.

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### OPINION

Vol. XIX

13th FEBRUARY 1979

No. 42

#### LOOKING

#### GAURI DESHPANDE

NTIL I came to stay in Bombay, some ten years ago, I was not aware of the fact that the divides of an hour can be less than a fifteen minute unit. In that distant time when I was settling down here and battling my way about single-handedly, I proposed to meet a friend at a suburban railway station. "I will meet you between six-fortyfive and seven," I said. She was flabbergasted at such loose thinking. "But when exactly?" I looked puzzled because for me until then, fiften minutes here and there had seemed exact enough. She went on, explaining, "You see, depending on the exact time, I will catch the six-three, or the sixeight or the six-thirteen. It makes a good ten minutes' difference at my end. I can finish a phone call or two." I humbly agreed to meet her at exactly six fifty-three, and paced the platform in an agony from six o'clock onwards. But those days were soon past. I found myself in no time at all talking of six-thirteens and eight-eightynines (if there are such things). I rushed past strangers, and then acquaintances and soon enough past friends too. No one seemed to mind. In fact all seemed a bit relieved that I showed no inclination to stop and pass the time of day. Very soon I found that the only place I could meet people I wanted to meet were bus queues, lifts, corridors of banks and other such public buildings. I never noticed whether it was summer or winter. I did notice when it was the monsoon, but only because my eight twentythree often came late. But the powers that be intervened and I was sent away from Bombay to a small town in Yugoslavia. There I became a housewife exclusively. I did, of course have a lot of things to do, but the floors did not have to be mopped, or the clothes washed and ironed, or even the dinner cooked at precisely eight-thirtynine, or six forty-eight. After giving the working man his breakfast, I found I could sling the baby in her rucksack and take a leisurely walk doing the daily shopping through picturesque lanes, buying the season's vegetables and fruit, fish, meat. There was time to take a matron's advice about what to feed a slightly underweight baby, there was time to haggle over the price of a melon, there was time to admire the sun slanting into Deocletian's square and the boats bobbing in the wind in the harbour. There was time to feel breathless over a smiling glance from a handsome Italian and laugh

over a pretty girl's flirtations with her dark young man. I didn't know that time could be divided into anything smaller than a season!

When we came back, I told the family that I was not going to take a nine to five (or eight twenty-three to five eighteen) any more. I'd do the housework, look after their comfort and write this and that when I got the time and the urge. By now they were all thoroughly spoilt with gourmet dinners and washed and mended clothes and larder full of this and that and mother pottering about the house. They agreed. And I found out that one can look about one in Bombay too. I have time to look at and talk to the flower man at the corner whose flowers I cannot afford to buy, but have found out in the course of dozens of desultory conversations where he is from, where and how he gets his flowers, how he spends his day, where are his family, and so on. In fact I have come to know him well enough for him to wink at me the other day while he was being interviewed 'in depth' by a pair of very smartly dressed, sleekly made up, smoking cub reporters. I am sure he thoroughly enjoyed handing out a lot of blarney to them. And I look at the hordes of pretty girls and smart working women who are rushing forth to catch their eight-thirtythrees and agree with my uncle who claims with an air of one having been cheated, that girls and women today have grown much more attractive than they used to be in his day, or even in my day! And I look at the dozens of stray cats and dogs and have come to know their personalities well. There's the marmalade and white pussy who sleeps on top of a black car in the winter (warmer) and under a white one in summer. He now becomes indignant if I pass him by without saying a few words to him. And there's the big brown healthylooking dog with the end of a footlong chain dangling from his neck. He must have made his bid for freedom some time ago, because the chain looks quite old and rusty, and he has lost most of the trusting faith in humanity that owner-oriented dogs have. I not only noticed that a lot of mangoes are in blossom this year, I even found clambering near a wall in a busy shopping area a mauve and magneta clad, glorious bignonia venusta.

And then there are the beggars of Bombay. One would not have thought there was anything to notice about them. In fact one would rather have not noticed them. But there are extremely interesting characters among them. Take the two I meet on my way to and from my daughter's school. I make this double trip twice a day, walking sometimes at a leisurely meander and sometimes at a fast trot. They now recognise me and give bright smiles, though they now know that from a business point of view I am a dead loss. The first one has his home on a patch of pavement. He keeps that patch and an area of about six feet in each direction spotlessly clean. He is always sweeping it up, dusting his rag-bed, smoothing his torn and greasy trouser cuff. He is a fanatic about cleanliness. He has a small screw-top bottle and under it a cracked plate and over it an up-ended earless cup. At eleven he is

wiping that plate and cup clean and putting them in front of him. When I return with my girl he has something in his plate and his bottle is halffull of either some buttermilk someone gives him, or water, and he has poured a little in his cup and is sipping it with his meal. He waves at the girl on my shoulder. I am sure that whoever provides him with the piece of bread or chappati and bhaji must be bringing it neatly wrapped in a piece of paper. I know that I would be ashamed of offering him anything less tidy.

The second one is only about a dozen paces down the road from the houseproud beggar. He is blind. What distinguishes him is also an excessive neatness. His torn clothes are neatly patched. His once-upona-time-grey trousers are cut a foot above the ground, so that he shouldn't trip. He has an old kurta instead of a shirt, but he wears it tucked tidily inside his pants. Patches of rags are wrapped around his feet and also tucked in around his ankles - his shoes. His sparse grey hair is combed and his white cane is tied with a string around his wrist. I suppose because of my unusually long stride and thick soled running shoes he called out to me "salaam saab" once or twice, but then heard me talking to the child and since then has unerringly recognised me and called out "salaam memsaab". He is generally so neat in fact, that once the end of the string which holds up his tiousers was hanging down to reach his knee, and unthinkingly, I almost reached out to tuck it in and then realised with shock that it would embarrass him to death, and withdrew Until I saw on the next day's journey that all was well with the string, I had a sense of having left something undone.

Only yesterday I saw what I myself might easily have become, had I not stopped to look and notice, to find time to talk and wait, to see and observe A very dignified looking gentleman darted past me at a fast clip, saying loudly and firmly, "The four-fortythree fast local for Dadar will arrive today on platform number two and will be seven and a half minutes late" I was tempted to follow him to find out what traumatic impact the late-coming of that train may have had on his life, because, but for the grace of God . . .

#### VIEW

A. H. Doctor: With the political storm now raging in Iran, U.S. policy in Asia is undergoing traumatic changes. Iran was till the other day, proclaimed as U.S.'s most trusted ally and hailed as a pillar of stability in Asia. Now that the pillar has crumpled down, the U.S. is frantically searching for new allies who can be erected as alternate pillars of stability. The Iranian turmoil had been preceded by the Afgan coup which resulted in the setting up of a pro-Soviet Communist government in Afghanistan. These twin developments have made some officials in the U.S. state department suggest that the U.S. build up special relationship with India

and encourage her to play a more significant role in the gaurding of the Indian ocean. It is however highly unlikely that the U.S. administration will make any such offer to India (what with the very sharp differences on NPT etc.). It is even more unlikely that India would accept any U.S. offer to enter into any special relationship with her, thereby compromising her much vaunted position as the leading light of the non-aligned movement.

In all probability what will therefore take place is that the U.S. will seek to strengthen and stabilise the government in Pakistan as well as help China to modernise and play a major role in the maintendant peace and stability in Asia. General Zia, himself facing a crisis at home, would only too willingly accept the notion of Soviet threat to Asia and in combination with U.S. and China seek to once again establish parity with India. One has only to recall such recent events as the inaugural of the strategic China-Pakistan road built through illegally occupied Indian territory in Gilgit and the recent C.I.A. report that Pakistan is the largest recipient of Chinese arms.

The recent developments in Asia involving our two near neighbours, Pakistan and China, make it necessary to sound a note of caution against being unduly complacent. A new relationship between the U.S.A., China and Pakistan can force India into two modes of action. Firstly, India will have to exert to prevent Pakistan seeking and gaining parity with India. Perhaps the best way to achieve this will be by adopting a determined policy to go nuclear within a definite time span. Secondly, willy nilly, India will be forced to go closer to the USSR in order to neutralise the effect of the USA-China-Pakistan axis. Since that too has its own dangers and it has been our avowed policy not to get aligned with any super-power, the logic of the situation demands that ultimately if we want to stay truly non-aligned and independent we must adopt a cautious policy of graduating ourselves to become a nuclear power.

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### OPINION

ol. XIX

20th FEBRUARY 1979

No. 43

#### THE PUBLIC VOICE

YES, I think the Khomeni Iranian Republic will work," said the smart young lady secretary with her eyes still upon the paper in her hand as she stood in the queue at the bus-terminus. "And why do you think so?" asked the economic journalist, thin, hatchet-faced, bespectacled, from his place two behind her. "The difficulties are enormous, you know, even in the way of all the Shah's opponents holding together. The Communists, with Russia behind them, will be trying to take over, the non-Communists may want to split according to their economic interests, the modernists will dislike religious dominance over social and economic life, the orthodox will be opposed to the common-sense tolerance of Khomeni and his group, the armed forces will hate reduction in their number and prestige, and so on and so forth. The odds against the Republic as it is working I would put at least at ten to one, if I were a betting man."

"I grant you all the difficulties you mention and even several more, such as the antagonism of authoritarian neighbours along the Gulf, and of Israel and South Africa, to whom for certam Iranian oil now will be denied, also of the great oil companies, the Seven Sisters, who will hate losing their profits from this impediment in the flow of oil to them, perhaps even the U.S. Government's very great coolness towards the new regime (already Kissinger and others of his ilk are blaming it for not propping up the Shah sufficiently and so, not preventing this from happening), but I stick to my view I do this because of the quality of the men involved. And I judge their quality by their deeds. Within less than a week after taking over, the four principal oppressors under the Shah of the people, the perpetrators of the most horrible excesses, have been charged, tried, sentenced and executed. These new men may not be political theorists and have governmental experience, but they know that nothing rejoices the ordinary man and woman more than the proper punishment of at least their leading oppressors, when a change of regime of this order is effected. The Shah was lucky to have fled. If they had caught him, he too would have shared the fate of his principal instruments. What a contrast they make to our lack-lustre government, to our Prime Minister, Law Minister and former Home Minister Charan Singh, who two years after the end of our oppressive regime, have been unable even to charge and try our tyrant, let alone sentence and punish her. The difference, I think, is that Khomeni, Bazargan, etc., are men who see the substance and are not led away by the appearance; our people go by

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the outside, the form, and rarely get down to the substance. As in this matter, so in the others too I think the now ruling Iranians will see things as they are, take their decisions soundly and firmly, and implement them without delay or fuss. All good people ought to wish them well."

"I do, I do, my dear," said the pleasant-faced, middle-aged, lady political scientist from her place two below the economic journalist. "But you know we are bound by the rule of law. We couldn't possibly deal with our tyrant and her worst instruments in the summary manner they must have done with theirs. Here delay is invitable. The proper and full procedure has to be followed; every fact, however well-known, has to be proved, and the worst criminal has to be considered innocent, until an independent judge, who has to go only by the evidence before him and cannot import any private knowledge he may have, finds him guilty. So you must moderate your indignation against our government, at least somewhat." "I am glad," said a luxuriously-moustached; white-haired, khadi-clad old gentleman, who stood leaning on his umbrella lower down the queue "you added the caveat. There can be little doubt indignation in this matter is justified. Two years go by and nothing done, not even a proper start made! It causes one to suspect the worst, connivance by authority to save one of its own kind, however wicked and wrong headed. What is the new name for it, ah yes, humanitarianism! You, being a high dignitary, appeal for pardon or reducing of punishment for an exhigh dignitary even if he be convicted of the most henious crime, and, of course, only on humanitarian grounds. It's true, 'a fellow-feeling makes us wondrous kind,' and we're all high dignitaries together, after all. Our high-ups would seem to have made up their humanitarian minds at an even earlier stage, no trial at all, forgiveness at the very begining, and since the people would very probably not fall for it, nay would oppose it stoutly, just keep on forgetting it, 'legal difficulties, you know, what can be done; the rule of law, our principle and foundation, can't be given the go-by.' But this is merely an excuse. Under the rule of law, people however high their ex-positions can and have been tried and punished, and with a fair amount of expedition. The law's delays are of course proverbial; as a rule it may be said, lawyers are delayers. Time is not often the essence of the matter to them. The full significance of the Magna Carta maxim 'justice delayed is justice denied' is rarely present in a living sense to very many of them, including some in the highest positions. If not today, tomorrow; if not tomorrow, day after or later even perhaps, is their normal attitude. This must have suited very well our high governmental dignitaries, who in any case do not seem to have been particularly anxious that our ex-tyrant should reap the rich rewards she well deserved. So I think the young lady's observations are valid, and the contrast she draws is correct."

"I agree that Khomeni's ministers are not likely to be daunted by the Tudeh communists and that probably, though there will be many difficulties, they will win through. What interests me most however is are they really going to be strictly orthodox? Will women have to assume the full veil again, and be confined to the house and the kitchen? Will there be no room any more for the Saqi and his cup? Will the horrible punishments of the past return, as in Pakistan now?" asked a handsome, young lady in a kaftan and embroidered silk slippers. "God alone knows," said the economic journalist, "but I don't think so, on the whole. You see both Khomeni and the Prime Minister have lived long in France, and ism. Accordingly I hope women will retain generally their present position in Iranian life, and as to wine, was it not a famous Persian poet who said 'wrongly they slander wine saying it brings disgrace on men, when in reality it is men who bring disgrace on wine.' Drinking as a pleasant social excercise in moderation has been a feature of Persian life long before the Shah, and I can only hope the new government will not fall prey to the Morarji prohibition disease. Of course, this can only be conjecture; briefly we don't know."

"What is not conjecture is that with every day that passes, the chances of our ex-tyrant getting off scot-free increase," said the young secretary, "even in minor matters like the case against her for refusing to give evidence before the Shah Comission, there is no progress reported. Has the Law Ministry become utterly impotent? Can't it get its counsel to press for urgent day-to-day hearings and prompt decisions in all cases concerning our ex-tyrant? Can't those in authority ask for daily reports on progress made in each matter? I remember hearing an old retired District Magistrate say many years ago that if you wanted results in any special criminal case, where the accused was influential and rich, you had to take a great dear of pains to keep in touch with what was happening everyday in court, to discuss again and again with the prosecuting counsel, let him feel you, that is Government, thought it important in the public interest that the culprit should receive adequate punishment, in fact take personally at least half the trouble that the accused would take in trying to secure his acquittal. If you didn't and left it to be looked after in the ordinary way, the result more often than not would be failure. and the public interest would suffer. Are there no former District Magistrates in the relevant ministries, who could apply this in practise in these special cases in which there cannot be the least doubt about the accused's riches and influence? Ah, here comes the bus." And so, after the bus had emptied, each in turn climbed in, and took his or her seat, generally by the window.

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

27th FEBRUARY 1979



## THE CHINA-VIETNAM AFFAIR

SHOCK and indignation, outrage and horror, has been the reaction in Delhi to the Chinese attack on Vietnam. Which only shows that very tew in Delhi know either China or Vietnam as they really are. Oh, oh, oh, China has committed aggression, shricks Delhi, and some of its more strident representatives even call upon the Indian Government to lead a world-wide campaign to condemn China. Says the Foreign Minister, who cut short his visit to China on hearing of the attack, the aggressor must not be allowed to reap the fruits of his aggression. And blah, blah, blah, as one of his colleagues is accustomed to add

Let us take Vietnam first. Is it a model, democratic, quiet, non-interfering country, content to rehabilitate its economy and recover from the wounds long wars against the French, the South Vietnamese and the Americans had inflicted on it? Very far indeed is it from being that. A tightly-controlled Communist dictatorship, from the first day of its independence it has sought domination over the whole of Indo-China Laos it has reduced to vassalage, and in Cambodia, it has driven out the Cambodian government that had seized power on Independence, and established its own henchmen in Pnom Penh. The fight against its men by the previous regime still continues but it wants its people to be recognised as the real rulers. All this it has done with the help of the Soviet Union, with whom it has signed recently a mutual defence treaty

China, another tightly-controlled Communist dictatorship with a long record of expansionism, has been at odds with it for some the over various issues, the latest being its actions in Cambodia, where the previous regime was particularly friendly to China. Having warned it for some time it seems to have finally decided that enough was enough, and has sought the arbiterment of arms, despite the knowledge that the Soviet Union also a tightly-controlled Communist dictatorship, with a long record of satelliteism and interference, extremely and internally, in the affairs of others, may well step in Briefly, says China to Vietnam, now I'll show you something and your big friend too, if he wants to come in.

In these circumstances, where should the sympathy of a true democracy, a bastion of freedom, lie? Freedom is anothema to all three. They

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have no room for that which is our life-blood. Why should we distress ourselves over the rights and wrongs of their internecine struggles? Let the dice fall as they may. They have chosen to fight one another. They are all enemies of the good, and conscience means nothing to them. So let us leave them alone, give equal ear to what each wants to tell us, and say nothing in reply, save perhaps that the grace of God is the true solvent of all problems and we shall pray that he may be pleased to extend it to them too.

As to the controversy about the appropriateness of Mr. Vajpayee's visit to China at this time, surely he had work there and he went. No one ought to blame him for that. And as to China's not requesting him to postpone his visit since it was going to invade Vietnam and so it would be awkward for him, the Chinese reply would probably be "Nonsense. What had the one to do with the other?" And in an aside "Ho, ho, ho, these outer barbarians now even lay claim to special sensitivity of feeling."

### J.P.'s SOCIALISM

#### A. H. DOCTOR

TODAY, when there is so much talk about nationalisation of key industries on ideological grounds, it is worthwhile to take a look at the concept of socialism propounded by Jayaprakash Narayan, by whose name so many members of the ruling party swear.

- To J. P. socialism does not mean a particular economic arrangement dictated by an unchanging ideology. As far back as 1950 J. P. made this clear when delivering a speech at the Second Asian Socialist Conference at Bombay. On that occasion J. P. observed that although all agreed that socialism was a way of life, "What is not so universally recognised is that such a way of life, attitudes, behaviour cannot be imposed from above by dictates of the government or by merely nationalising industry and abolishing capitalism."
- J. P. warns against equating socialism with rapid economic development. "The mischief starts" he says, "when we begin measuring socialist achievement in terms of tons of steel and kilowatts of electricity. . . . Because all the experts then find it easy to prove that economic growth, particularly in a backward country, cannot be rapid enough unless the state gathered in its hands adequate powers." And when the state gathers all economic power in its hands, that is, state capitalism state gathers all economic power in its hands that is, state capitalism which is far worse than simple capitalism. For, under the latter there is the state to check private business, but under the former who is there to check the state?

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That J. P.'s state provides an honourable place to the private company is clear from the answer he gave to Subrata Bannerjee of the Economic Times. While answering the question, "How do you visualise the pattern of industrial development?" J. P. answered, "The ownership question is not so important as far as I can see unless the ownership is of political significance, that is, the owning of some economic institutions or organisations which lends political power to manipulate Then of course to that extent I would like to break their political power. But if they work well merely as economic institutions, I would like them to be more on the pattern of a responsible company. I would not use the word trusteeship for that is not the current coin. But a private firm which is responsible to its proprietors, shareholders, and also to its producers, workers and employees, and also consumers who buy the goods so that they do not sell shoddy goods or overprice them."

To J. P., Socialism is not any "ism" but rather a set of of moral values. Two values which J P. would seem to emphasise most in regard to socialism are voluntary sharing and non-materialism (Limited Wants). The crucial factor in Socialism is sharing which can only be voluntary and not distribution. "Distribution of wealth may be an uncertain step towards Socialism but sharing of wealth is real and full socialism." Similarly, J. P. wants to build his socialism on non-materialism because as he claims, "Materialism robs man of the means to be truly human". J. P. instead pleads for an "Economy of Limited Wants" where men are satisfied with meeting essential wants and do not hanker after unlimited wants which establish an imbalance in human life. Two other values which J. P. emphasises are: Man must not exploit man and must not exploit nature. The latter implies an economy which restricts consumption as far as possible to renewable resources and uses as little as possible of the resources it cannot give back to nature.

Since Socialism is essentially a set of moral values, J. P. wicely instructs government to usher in a Socialist era by changing its emphasis from "political action" to "work of re-construction". Delivering the Convocation address at the Benaras Hindu University, in February 1970, J. P. said, "Socialism cannot be established by law, for it is a way of life, a value system which can be instituted, not by legal coercion, but by universal educative efforts which can be made only by volunteers and voluntary organisations.8

Finally, our contemporary politicians will do well to heed J. P.'s warning against an over-emphasis on the concept of class-conflict': "The self-interest of labour has been juxtaposed to that of capital. . . . Labour actuated by self-interest wishes to create a different social order in which it is assumed selfishness will not rule the lives of men. This is a fundamental contradiction. As the Hindi proverb says: you cannot plant a thorn tree and expect it to bear mangoes."

1. Jayaprakash Narayan, "Towards Total Revolution", Vol. L. 'Search for an Ideology', Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, p. 170.

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- 2 Ibid.
- 3. Jayaprakash Narayan, "Towards Total Revolution", Vol 4, 'Total Revolution', Popular Prakashan, Bombay 1978, p 159
- 4. Jayaprakash Narayan, "Towards Total Revolution", Vol 1, op cit., p. 173.
- 5. Jayaprakash Narayan, "A Plea for the Reconstruction of the Indian Polity", Akhila Bharatiya Sarva Seva Sangh, November 1959, p 5
- 6 Ibid, pp 74-75
- 7 Jayaprakash Narayan, "Towards Tetal Revolution", Vol 1, op cit, pp. 170-71.
- 8 Jayaprakash Narayan, "Towards Total Revolution", Vol 3, 'India and Problems", Popular Prakashan, Bombay, 1978, p 63
- 9. Jayaprakash Narayan, "Towards Total Revolution", Vol 1, op cit, p. 171

### **RUNNING**

#### GAURI DESHPANDE

ONE became interested in things like running, jogging and the like because one had the good fortune to have been in Europe during the last Olympics. Day in and day out, endlessly, the TV shoved at one the images of marvellous feats or physical prowess achieved by strong, fit, lithe, muscular, athletic human beings. Since at that time one had acquired, along with the baby a lot of avoirdupois, one was soon shamed into taking up a running programme The ease with which we launched into one and continued with it made us forget what such addictions would lead to at home. There the city provided all us runners with a wooded, graded, smooth track; swimmers with a heated indoor pool; gymnasts with well appointed gyms; and of course endless football, basketball, handball fields. I think except for a golf-link, there was everything you needed to take up and enjoy whatever you desired in sports and healthfacilities. And I am not talking of a prosperous, fashionable, populous West European city. This was a small town in Yugoslavia, poor enough, we used to say joking, for its policemen to prowl about looking for people doing 31 km. in a 30 km. zone

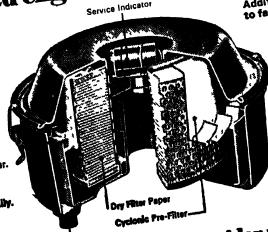
Feeling almost olympically fit we returned home to problems. No running tracks, no gyms, no swimming pools, a whole lot of roads closed to bikes during the most pleasant times of the day. In despair took up running in place to the rhythm of Vivid Bharati, got bored out of our wits and were about to give up when a friend told us to try the inner dirt track of the Mahalaxmi race course. The Turf Club in its wisdom does not object, and we enjoy a brisk run in the morning. This same friend works for the Municipal Corporation of Greater Bombay. We complained to him about this sad lack in our favourite city and he said, true, there are no public gyms, nor running tracks, nor bike tracks, and nine swimming



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pools. NINE! Where? He slyly enumerated things in Ghatkopar and Varsova. I have nothing against people keeping fit in Ghatkopar, but what about me?

The fact is that the city which likes to think of itself as India's premier city (whether it is or not, is a matter we won't go into here) provides no sport facilities for the low or even medium income groups. These people can only pound the footpaths at five o'clock in the morning (as we used to do some times before discovering the race course), or run on the spot. The sea and the beaches with which this city is blessed are less than useless on account of the unbelievable pollution, both industrial and human. The Indian, my MCGB friend explained, does not consider things like running, swimming, walking, exercises. His mind runs to body-building, weight-reducing, height-increasing. This seems to be true. Every few weeks we get brochures through the mail slot, advertising 'courses' in these and similar activities. They are sent around by the many branches of the commercial gyms which have sprung up all over town. These gyms have weights, bars, stationary bikes, calisthenics/ Judo/yoga teachers, masseurs, saunas. They cost from fifty rupees a month to three hundred, depending upon their location and equipment. They all consider the simple aim of keeping fit too paltry. To attract their attention you have to be too something—too thin, too fat, too short and of course too rich.

On our daily stint at the race course we meet many kindred spirits who would rather not spend any money on keeping fit. They are either too poor; satisfied with their respective weights, heights, muscles and so on; and their faith in humanity has not as yet met with such reverses as to make them want to learn the martial arts at one of the above-mentioned gyms. So they all like us, put in just the effort. We at least possess the minimum of gym shoes and track suits, but there are many who just come in and start running in their street clothes and plastic sandals. My favourite is a fifty-year-old, factory-worker-like-looking person, who comes walking to the race course, removes his shirt and trousers, pulls on canvas shoes from a paper bag, tucks the bundle of his outer clothing under his arm and starts running. He finishes his two rounds, pulls on his clothes and walks out. The other day he had his teenage son with him, having difficulty in keeping up with Father. And there is a sardar family - son, father, mother. They come towards us every morning in that order; and on weekends when we are having a more leisurely stroll with the children, they determinedly stride past in the evenings as well. And there are any number of foreigners—husbandwife teams, an owner of an enormous borzoi, an atheletic European who does the whole bit-calisthenics, run, walk, stretches, cool-offs. We are nowhere near so wholeheartedly dedicated, however, and find ourselves quite bored by the daily vistas of stands, factory chimneys, planeterium, high-rises, horses revolving before our eyes in that or reverse order.

Then, for a while we switch to the Marine Drive. Early in the mornings it is thronged with bird-feeders, surya-upasaks, morning air-



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takers and strollers, but few earnest joggers. If you have an inferiority complex then Marine Drive is the place to go. No point in pitching a weak will and a flabby belly against that determined lot on the race course. The physical culturists on Marine Drive consist of overweight girls, old gossiping retired gentlemen, walkers of pug dogs and the like. The real competition to your ego will come from across the road where the various gymkhana clubs have their grounds. There all the young "Gavaskars" (as my child persists in calling them in what I consider unwarranted optimism) are working out at their morning net practice. And of course, on Marine Drive is one of the oldest centres of one of the newest fads-yoga. There you may meet extraordinary people, looking at whom you wonder how human beings could have allowed themselves to grow into such monstrous shapes and sizes. But they are all trying. A whole lot of people in Bombay seem to have woken up to the necessity of doing something about their weights, muscles, hearts, lungs. They all see the need for fast walking, slow jogging, running, biking, deep breathing, twisting bodies into unaccustomed shapes And all that Bombay has to offer them are its dug up roads and pavements which serve as a lot of people's homes—bedrooms, kitchens, toilets; a lot of people's shops bhaji, bhel, candy-floss, sweaters, footwear; they are even, wonder of wonders, used by some people to go from one place to another.

I certainly agree that Bombay has to solve a whole lot of very pressing problems if it is not to deteriorate into yet another dying metropolis. It has to house its poor millions; give them education, jobs, pure water, electricity; it has to take them over vast distances and in vast numbers every day. But it should also benefit itself if the people who already possess some of these are helped to become and continue a little healthier. Its fine old parks have large signs saying that no form of exercise is to be taken there. .Its large smooth roads have signs (and also policemen) forbidding people to ride bikes on them between such and such times. extensive beaches are for eating bhelpuri and throwing waste on. But all we ask for is a few smooth, level dirt tracks. Not more than 500 metres long and reasonably straight. Could there not be one conveniently located near most communities? One is willing to go upto three miles out of one's way for some exercise, but to ask one to go every day from Haji Ali to Ghatkopar is a bit much. And all those I have talked to, give the characteristic half-shrug with which the Bombay man and woman meet the many sad lacks in their lives. They seem to say, all this jogging and running and swimming cannot, after all stave off death! With typical Indian's centuries-old fatalism, they put up with everythink philosophically. The philosophy, in the words of a Marathi poet, translated freely and coloquially, which says, "Be content to simmer in the juice in which the good Lord has seen fit to stew you." The operative word in Bombay in October while you are doing the Royal Canadian Air Force Exercises in your steamy 10 x 12 bedroom, is STEW.

#### VIEW

G. K. W.: The President has joined the ranks of clemency-seekers for Mr. Bhutto. On purely humanitarian grounds, it was explained next day. It is difficult to understand how humanitarianism enters into seeking a reduction of sentence for a man convicted of conspiracy to murder, whose appeal has been dismissed by the country's Supreme Court. There is of course the fact that the President and Mr. Bhutto are both members of the human race, but if it was on that consideration that the President made his plea, he must himself have excercised clemency in all the mercy petitions that go to him from his own country. Like the Sessions Judge of old who would not pass sentence of death, however well-deserved the extreme penalty If not, does his humanitarianism mean a special synt; pathy for Mr. Bhutto, because he too, like the President nov as for quite a number of years a very high dignitary of the state. A fellowfeeling makes us wondrous kind" The President surely understands that however high a man may be, he still is below the law. In fact, if a man in a high position commits wilfully a grievous crime, the punishment for him has to be more, not less, than for an ordinary man. His position carries with it the obligation on him to behave better. Says Winston Churchill in a somewhat similar context: "It is necessary to strip men capable of such deeds of all title to honour, whether it be the light which plays around a great captain of war or the long repute which covers the severities of a successful prince or statesman"

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## OFINION

ol. XIX

6th MARCH 1979

No. 45

M. VAJPAYEE is uneasy. He has received information that Pakistan is about to go nuclear and that this will not be only for peaceful purposes. Within the last few weeks, military opinion (retired) expressed itself for the first time in favour of our making the bomb. Are these indications of a change in thinking in high quarters, or at least of a preparation to consider the other point of view? Truly the grace of God has been with us, so that out complacency and neglect in this matter over the years has not yet led to our total destruction. But let us remember that while "for the ignorant there is hope, the grace of God can bring enlightenment; when to ignorance is added overweening conceit and the desire never to learn, even the grace of God in time becomes helpless."

To assist in the reconsideration of this matter, here is an article that appeared in *Opinion* nearly thirteen years ago:

- Q.: Should India make the bomb?
- A.: Yes, if she wishes to remain independent and democratic
- Q.: What exactly is meant by the bomb?
- A.: The bomb means the hydrogen bomb with the necessary delivery systems to enable it to be targetted on the principal centres of the enemy, in our case, Communist China. The atom bomb is a first step towards the thermo-nuclear hydrogen bomb and so we must start with it, but no purpose would be served by our making it and stopping, in view of the enemy's progress in this field. If the aim were just to be content with the atom bomb, it would be as well not to bother at all.
  - Q.: But would not making the atom bomb add to our status?
- A: To talk about status in this connection is to be futile. We need nuclear weapons for our preservation, not for the prestige. If prestige were the only, or even the main, consideration, *Opinion* would certainly not suggest the expense. Only as the imperative defence measure is making the bomb justified.
  - Q.: How is this the imperative defence measure?
- A.: It is imperative, because if you do not take it, if you do not have the hydrogen bombs and all that is necessary to deliver them, it does not matter what else in the known field of weapons you have. No other strength you can muster up can save you. You must inevitably become a part of the Communist Chinese empire or perhaps, at best a catellite of Communist China, governed by Indian Communists who take their orders from Peking. The bomb puts its possessor in a position of absolute superiority vis-a-vis its non-possessor. Surrender or be totally

destroyed, becomes the ultimatum, nothing less, and the threat can be most speedily carried out. If Communist China having the bomb, and we not having it, we dared to oppose its commands, within 20 to 45 minutes of our reply, Delhi, Calcutta, Madras, Bombay might well be rubbleheaps, their inhabitants corpses.

- Q.: But that could happen even if we had the bomb, couldn't it?
- A.: Yes, but then in the same 20 to 45 minutes, Peking, Shanghai, Canton, and other large Chinese centres would also be rubbleheaps and their inhabitants corpses. The Communist Chinese would know that very well and so they would behave. The bomb is in fact the true deterrent. If you have it, even its other possessors, especially the Communist Chinese, cannot push you around; much less can countries not having it. We have no desire at all ourselves to push anyone around, no claims to make against any other nation, so that no probability of aggression by us is likely, making the bomb in our hands an active danger.
- Q.: You talk as if only Communist China and India were concerned. But there are the present nuclear powers, the U.S., the U.S.S.R., Britain. What about them? Wouldn't they aid us and stop Chinese nuclear blackmail against us before it came to the point of Communist Chinese bombs being let off? Why not rely on them and stop troubling about this deadly bomb business?
- Upto today there has not been disclosed the least reason for relying on them. Consider the position. Communist China has by now a stockpile of about 30 atom bombs. It is speedily developing the hydrogen In two years, say the experts, by the end of 1968 at latest, it will be able to deliver through its developing missile system, bombs on any place within 500 miles of the Tibetan border. A good part of North India will be within the target area, so will portions of the Soviet Union. Is there the least sign of opposition from the U.S. or Britain, who are right outside the target area, to this development? And the U.S.S.R., does it even suggest desisting to its fellow-Communist state? No, all three look on gloomily and that is all. To the request that they, the nuclear powers, should together guarantee the non-nuclear powers against nuclear attack by any nuclear power, from them there is no answer. All they seem capable of is a solemn muttering, indistinct and inchoate, against what they term proliferation, i.e., anybody, except themselves, China and France making nuclear weapons. In effect to India they seem to say, "Don't take the right step to protect yourself; we won't protect you of course." This, mind you, at a time when Communist China cannot in any case damage the U.S. and Britain in the least and the Soviet Union only marginally! Would there be any sense then in hoping that in about seven years when the U.S., Britain and the whole of the U.S.S.R. come within the Chinese target area, their attitude will change and they will stand up to that firstclass nuclear power Communist China, willingly risking the total destruction of San Francisco, New York, London, Manchester, Moscow, Leningrad, to prevent Communist China from forcing its, will upon India or in the alternative, destroying its cities? Even your most sanguine Indian temperament is surely compelled by now to realise that in this

matter there is no help for us except in ourselves. Do nothing then, keep on havering as you have been doing over the last two years, look around anxiously for some easy way out, and be sure that you will be Red or if a sudden unlikely access of desperate defiance seizes your leaders, Dead. This is not pessimism, my friend. This is only seeing things as they are and their consequences as they must be.

- Q.: You're probably right. I won't dispute that. But what about the economic side? A great deal of money will surely be needed. Where is that to come from?
- A.: Not such a very great deal in fact. According to the best possible estimates, 2,400 crores from beginning to end, hydrogen bomb, delivery system, everything, and this to be spent over a period of six years. But assuming it to be 3,000 crores or even 4,000 and to be spent in 5 years not six, is that too high a price for freedom and national independence? Would you rather keep that and have the Communist Chinese lording it over you? The money you have saved would be of previous little use to you once they or their instruments took over.
- Q.: Well, yes, but what about Pakistan? If we make the bomb won't they want to make one, too?
- A.: They may, and let them if they want. Why shouldn't they? The point really is if we have the bomb they will be compelled to behave, even if they have the bomb. They know we can retaliate instantly and effectively and so they won't want to tempt fortune. If they don't have the bomb, no question arises. Their having the bomb when we have it also would affect us detrimentally only if we wish to do them harm. This we do not want to do. All we want from them is resonable, correct behaviour, and leaving us alone. Our bomb would make that fairly certain. Consider on the other hand our position in view of the Communist Chinese-Pakistan nexus, if we don't make the bomb. Supposing China, even before her hydrogen bomb, out of a stockpile of about a hundred atom bombs which she will have accumulated by 1968, hands over a dozen to Pakistan for use against us. Recollect that an atom bomb, which can easily be released from a high-flying Air Force plane can do very great damage in life and property to a large city. The dropping of two over Japan was enough to make the still undefeated Japanese lay down their arms and sue for peace. The bombs having been received, Pakistan gets to work. At say 11.30 on the night of the 31st December, the Pakistan ambassador in Delhi seeks an immediate audience on a matter of the highest importance with the Indian Prime Minister. At 12 midnight he is ushered in and to the Prime Minister's 'happy new year' answers that his President has sent the following message to be delivered forthwith. His country's troops are on the borders of Jammu and Kashmir, Assam and the Punjab. The patience of Pakistan has been exhausted by India's complete intransigence. He therefore has ordered his troops to start moving into India at 6 a.m. He demands the immediate complete cession of Jammu and Kashmir, and of Assam to Pakistan. Other points he will discuss on arrival at Delhi. He trusts there will be no opposition, to, Pakistani arms! which are only animated by the desire

for justice and would like to avoid unnecessary shedding of human blood In case his demands about Jammu and Kashmir, and Assamuare inot accepted by the Indian Government by 5 minutes to 5 mm; he will be under the painful necessity of dropping atom bombs on 9 Indian cities, beginning with Delhi at 5 a.m. and ending with Madras at 7 a.m. convince the Indian Government that he is in a position to carry out what he has said, he proposes to drop an atom bomb on Ambala at 2.30 a.m. Reports from there should be immediately forthcoming to Delhi and will no doubt satisfy the Delhi authorities that he is in earnest. Hereals on God to witness that he has no desire for conflict, no wish to desire for conflict, but the right, and that all that may happen is the sole responsibility of the Government of India. His Ambassador will wait for the Prime Minister's reply. He trusts that will be given in sufficient time before 4.55 to enable him to countermand the order that would lead to the total ' destruction of Delhi, a city to the adornment and beautifying of which his people had contributed so greatly, and accordingly a city particularly dear to their hearts. He hopes that almighty God will give the Prime Minister and Government of India the good sense to recognise the inevitable and bow to it, for above all things he loathes the destruction of that tabernacle of the divine spirit, the human being. What then can the Prime Minister do or the Cabinet, when it has been gathered together? Appeal to the United Nations, the United States, the Soviet Union, Britain? Certainly, but Ambala will go up in flames at 2.30, and Delhi at 5 with a large part of the directing authority of the country, and once all that has been threatened happens and the cities are no more and the country, totally confused, is under the Pakistan heel, who will move to the rescue, the U.S., the U.S.S.R., Britain or the Secretary-General of the United Nations? Who dies if India dies? Only the Indians unfortunately. And it would be best for us to recognise that perhaps, then surrender may be best. So you see how very necessary it is for us not to waste a day, a minute. Already, the hour is far, far later than you and the Government of India think. An all-out crash programme, properly designed, properlydetailed, properly-financed, must be embarked on forthwith. You have most of the men; such as you have not, get; it is unnecessary to enter into details here about how or from where. You have the money. Forward, in good heart and staunch determination. Nothing is more important than this (24-5-1966).

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### THE BUDGET

P. V. R. RAO

THE Annual Budget this year was awaited with more than usual interest—and, in some quarters, with not a little trepidation—because of the enigmatic personality of the new Finance Minister and the circumstances in which he was reinducted into the Cabinet, even as the budget was in the process of being finalised. His rather non-conformist views on the country's development plans and pronounced bias in favour of agriculture evoked misgivings among certain sections of the public which, while recognising the importance of agriculture in the country's economy, sees no future for its burgeoning population except in rapid industrialisa-As soon as Shri Charan Singh rejoined the Cabinet, his selfstyled Hanuman, left on the sidelines, was asserting publicly the new strategy of wrecking the Government from within The performance of Nawab Liaquat Ali Khan as Finance Minister in another uneasy coalition in 1946 was recalled by many with dismal foreboding Shri Charan Singh, with perhaps one plausible exception, is the first Finance Minister the country has had, with roots firmly in agriculture; and he had made it clear that his first budget would bear his stamp. In this, the public has not been disappointed For better or worse, Shri Charan Singh's first budget makes a marked departure from all previous budgets and commands careful study.

The budget estimates for 1979-80 provide for an expenditure of Rs 18,526 crores against an income of Rs. 17,171 crores, leaving an uncovered gap of Rs. 1,355 crores. In the 1978-79 budget, the estimated deficit was Rs 1,071 crores, which has now been revised to Rs. 1,590 crores, exclusive of an adjustment of Rs. 555 crores, being the amount the State Governments had overspent and overdrawn on the Centre. The deficit may appear staggering at first sight. This is the third successive year that the Centre is indulging in a deficit of this order; and the quantum of deficit is increasing from year to year. It would be surprising if there is any let-up in the increase in the tempo of government expenditure; and revenues are scarcely buoyant enough to bridge the gap. When the Janata Party assumed office two years back, the Prime Minister was reported to be very reluctant to countenance resort to deficit financing. Deficit financing has now obviously become respectable. It is to the credit of the Janata Government that, notwithstanding the heavy dose of deficit financing in two successive years, the price level has remained remarkably

stable. Yet, as the Governor of the Reserve Bank emphasised recently, the laws of demand and supply are inexorable; and no country or government can claim immunity therefrom. It is arguable that the increase in agricultural and industrial production achieved in these years, coupled with prudent finance management, has enabled the country to digest these heavy doses of deficit financing; and further dollops thereof used with circumspection and, in step with increased production, is justifiable. Increased production continues to remain a main plank in the Government's programme Practically all of the deficit spending may be attributable to capital investment expenditure; it may be contended that it would be unwise to curtail in a developing economy such expenditure and invite stagnation, if not a reduction, in production. It has also been urged that these deficits can be deemed to be underwritten by the substantial stocks of food and foreign exchange the country holds.

Both agricultural and industrial production have registered an increase last year. Shri Charan Singh has claimed that these increases are not fortuitous, but results of a considered policy. Increased agricultural productivity was in good part due to increased availability of irrigation and of fertiliser. Increased industrial production was helped by an increase in power generation and timely and sizeable import of basic materials in short supply. It is, however, necessary to emphasise that the path of deficit finance, while attractive, is very slippery; and continued vigilance is called for in pursuing it. Over sixty per cent of the Central budget consists in fact of non-development expenditure. At one stage, Shri Charan Singh was bold enough to claim that "Non-plan" expenditure has been limited to what is strictly necessary keeping in view the need for economy consistent with efficiency. "Conscious perhaps of the eyebrows which must have been raised at this tall claim, he went on to announce Government's concern at the continued growth of such expenditure and his intention to appoint a commission" to conduct a comprehensive survey of such expenditure and to "examine the impact of public expenditure on the promotion of growth and reduction of poverty and recommend ways and means of making public expenditure more effective in solving the problems of poverty". A Commission is a recognised means of postponing the day of reckoning.

Concurrent is the need to instil a sense of financial discipline in the State Governments. As has happened many times before, the Centre has again bailed the States out of their over-drawn unauthorised advances. The outlay on this account is Rs. 555 crores. The States are thus now in a position to start with a clean slate. The Seventh Finance Commission has recommended a greater devolution of financial resources to the States. The recent meeting of the National Development Council was able to hammer out an agreed formula for the distribution of other available resources among the States. Of course, this is no guarantee that States will not resort to unauthorised overdrafts and try to exploit the oft displayed weakness of the Central Government to stand up to such challenge. It is to be hoped that Shri Charan Singh will be able to inculcate in them a sense of financial responsibility by precept, practice and persuasion.

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The proposals for expenditure in the 1979-80 budget follow broadly the same pattern as in the 1978-79 budget. Shri H. M. Patel had defined, while presenting that budget, his objective as one of setting in motion a process of sustained increase in output and employment, particularly in the rural sector. He provided for massive investments in the rural sector, for early completion of projects in progress and, while claiming that full provision has been made for meeting the requirements of agriculture. undertook to make further provision if needed. The increase in production which has been achieved, underlines the soundness of the strategy. Shri Charan Singh has also defined his objective as raising agricultural productivity further by using improved technology and more inputs, to assign agriculture and rural development the pride of place in the plans and to accelerate the pace and thrust of programmes which have a material bearing on agricultural growth and promotion of employment provision for agriculture and rural development has been raised from Rs. 1,754 crores to Rs. 1,811 crores and for irrigation, from Rs. 1,408 crores to Rs. 1,488 crores. There are increased provisions for a national dairy programme, for rural electrification, rural water supply, rural roads, etc. These programmes call for no comment except to mention a point, often reiterated, of avoiding wasteful expenditure and of realising the desired results. The problem is not one of provision of money, but of proper implementation. Thus, it is now over forty years since a beginning was made with regard to provision of rural water supply. From year to year. increasing budget provisions are made; yet the problem seems no nearer solution! Rural Works Programmes, Employment Guarantee Schemes, Food for Work, Rural Roads, etc., are schemes which gather such ready emotional support that they provide a ready field for personal aggrandisement under cover of the innocent underprivileged. Governments have experienced quite a few shocks in this regard while implementing successive plans: but it is doubtful whether proper deductions have been drawn. An audit of expenditure against assets created, in a constructive and not faultfinding spirit, requires to be organised if schemes for relieving mass unemployment are to achieve on the ground the desired results.

The real thrust of the new budget is not in its proposals for expenditure as in its plan for mobilising the needed resources. Shri Charan Singh has embarked on a massive programme of new taxation. The proposals envisage raising over rupees one thousand crores by additional taxation, of which nearly a quarter is being returned in the form of tax reliefs to favoured groups. Additional taxation is partly by moderate changes in income and wealth taxes, by changes in excise and customs duties, by substantial imposts on petroleum products and certain adjustments in postal, telegraph and telephone charges. Tax reliefs are to the agricultural sector—about Rs. 120 crores by reduction of the duty on fertiliser and light diesel and a similar amount by abolition of excise on unmanufactured tobacco. The new levies are concentrated on articles of consumption, mainly of the urban gentry. Explaining the philosophy underlying his taxation proposals, Shri Charan Singh has stated his objectives to be:

- (i) reduction in disparities of income and wealth;
- (ii) increase in production but avoidance of diversion of resources to wasteful and unproductive use; and
- (iii) elimination of unemployment and underemployment by stimulating agricultural production and labour intensive techniques.

The principles themselves have been repeatedly voiced, but given effect to by successive finance ministers selectively according to their whims and needs. Shri Charan Singh is unique in that he has set about his task in a purposive manner.

The changes in the Income and Wealth tax rates and in the P&T charges yield about Rs. 100 crores. The main comment these changes call for is about their administrative impact. A hike in P&T rates may be unavoidable to make the services self-sustaining and generate in part the resources needed for expansion. The postcard is the main stay of the poor man; and other users may reasonably be called upon to subsidise it. But the postcara is also a source of considerable loss to the Department; and it should not happen that the wide gap between the cost of an inland lettercard and the post card will defeat the very objective in raising the levy. Similar considerations apply to the increase in the rates of income and wealth tax. The people on whom the additional burden will fall can certainly be called upon to bear such burden, but is the Government machinery geared to do so effectively? The problem is one of evasion of tax and of fuelling a parallel black market economy. The downward revision made in the incidence of these taxes a few years back had improved collections and dampened evasions. Both in the 1978-79 budget and in the present budget, this trend has been reversed, though on a very modest scale. Shri Charan Singh is aware of the dangers and has promised to address himself to the task of effective implementation of the tax laws with the 'utmost zeal and vigour'. Shri Charan Singh's performance as Home Minister does not, however, give credence to his capacity to tackle successfully the more sophisticated and elusive gentry with whom he will now be involved. These measures must await judgement by the results.

The Finance Minister hopes to raise an additional sum of Rs. 280 crores by levies on petroleum products. He has exempted light diesel as a part of his package to help agricultural production, which is being examined below. The impost on petroleum is being justified partly as a soaking of the rich, but the Minister is also taxing simultaneously LPG, kerosene and motor trucks! The demand on petroleum products has been increasing rapidly, notwithstanding various price rises. India will continue to be a heavy importer of oil; and must be prepared to face a further hike in the price of international crude. The increased levy on petroleum products is necessary and unavoidable.

The changes proposed in the customs and excise duties on other items is expected to yield over Rs. 700 crores; but about Rs. 240 crores is being returned to agricultural producers in the shape of reduction of imposts on fertilisers and light diesel and by exempting from excise producers of tobacco. The duty now levied on unmanufactured tobacco is



being shifted from the producer and the curer to the manufacturer. The shift will be very popular with the growers; and, if, as the Finance Minister seems to think, the same amount of revenue can be raised by an administratively more simple and less expensive method, the step deserves to be commended. Incidentally, it may help to boost the Janata Party image in the rural areas of Andhra Fiadoch and elsewhere—a fallout effect, which need not be grudged.

Abolition of the tax holiday on increased industrial production and juggling with various customs and excise rates is expected to bring in over Rs. 500 crores. The tax holiday has been in operation for over three years and must be now deemed to have outlived its original usefulness. The increase in rates on cosmetics, toilet articles and certain other articles in common use by the middle classes, though it has given rise to a howl of protest from a vocal section of the public, is unobjectionable, given the need for resources. After all, these people may not be affluent but are economically far better of than a majority of the general community. Besides, there has been a rapid growth in recent years in the production of such articles within the country. The exemption from these imposts given in favour of cottage industries is another point in their favour. The proposed study of the effect of various imposts on production and how they can be utilised to promote cottage and small scale industries will be watched with interest.

Where Shri Charan Singh has struck out a new line is in his attempt to transfer over Rs. 200 crores a year into the pockets of agricultural producers at a time when he has called upon other sections of the community to make further contributions and his own appetite for resources is barely satisfied. Fiscal and other measures to boost agricultural production are not new and have also been adopted in the past But Shri Charan Singh has unfurled with gusto the flag of the farmer lobby to bring it in sharp confrontation with other sections of the community.

The role of the agricultural sector in the country's economy and its contribution towards the resources needed for planned development has given rise to two broad lines of thought. One group, to which Shri Charan Singh obviously belongs, feels that the interests of the agricultural community has been sacrificed at the altar of rapid planned industrialisation and agricultural producers have been called upon to bear a disproportionately large share of the cost of planned development. Immediately, in the last two years, there has been a pronounced fall in the price of agricultural commodities, while the price level of industrial products has actually gone up. On the other hand, it is pointed out that, through successive plans, agricultural production has increased enormously, that investments made in successive plans have been primarily responsible for this increase, but the contribution of the agricultural sector to plan resources is not adequate or commensurate with the investment made. This dichotomy of thought reaches to the top Government level. The Planning Commission is never tired of exhorting State Governments to raise more resources for their plans; the implication is that agriculturists should be

taxed more, both per se and by appropriate upward revision of charges for services supplied. On the other hand, a few weeks back, Shri Barnala, the Minister for Agriculture, proclaimed that "States have been advised to abolish existing levies and taxes on agriculture and not to levy new taxes on agriculture." No particular sanctity can attach to the existing, or proposed, rate of lawy on fertiliser. The existing rate was perhaps primarily influenced by revenue needs. Having regard to the present tempo in the use of fertilisers, it cannot be said that a reduction in duty was called for to give a boost to its use; or that such reduction will increase the consumption of fertiliser and increase production substantially. The reduction in the duty on light diesel is even more questionable, as more than half the consumption is outside the agricultural sector.

The reliefs proposed will accrue mainly to a limited section of comparitively affluent agricultural producers. The persons who will be benefitted most are the large farmers, who are in a position to take full advantage thereof. The medium, as well as the marginal, farmer will benefit, but to a far less extent; while the large mass of landless labour do not stand to benefit at all. It is pertinent to recall here the slow progress in the implementation of the various laws regarding land reforms and land ceilings to realise who will be the receivers of Shri Charan Singh's bounty. To understand the quantum of the largess that is being given, it should be mentioned that these excise concessions come on the top of support prices already announced and are in addition to fertiliser subsidies, for which the budget has made a provision of Rs. 448 crores against Rs. 317 crores in the year just ending. At a time when the budget is in heavy deficit and other sections of the community who are not as prosperous as the large, and often even as much as the medium, farmer are being called upon to make further contributions to reduce the gap, these proposals, which in effect result in collection of resources from the relatively less well-off, and the transfer of those proceeds to persons who are more affluent than them, require better justification. A way out may be to subject production inputs to a uniform levy, but simultaneously to bring agricultural income under the scheme of general income tax. This has not been deemed feasible so far on the ground that agricultural income tax is a State subject. It is significant that, while there is a considerable demand that sales tax should be replaced by a central excise, the invidious position of agricultural income does not attract equal attention. Indeed, the transfer of taxation of agricultural income to the Centre can be more easily affected by reducing central assistance to State Plans by the extent of the bonus States continue to extend to their rural rich by not levying an income tax on agricultural incomes or levying it inadequately. The problem is gaining importance because of the heavy investments the country has made in the agricultural sector, which are now yielding benefits, accruing more and more only to a limited section of the total community.

Shri Charan Singh's emphasis on increased agricultural production needs also to be qualified in the present stage of our agricultural economy. Thanks to continuous sustained effort since independence, substantial sur-

pluses, even after allowing for seasonal variations, have begun to appear. Export can help, but then the cost of production has to be competitive in the world markets. Sugar is a standing example. Failure to recognise in time the trend of growth in sugar production has resulted in the country being saddled with heavy stocks; and what is more important, has left the numerous cane-growers in the lurch. Covernment may declare a supporterice, but the grower is not receiving payment in time. While there is put in certain agricultural commodities, there are serious shortages in other items in urgent need—pulses, edible oils. A programme of blanket push to production is no longer suitable and requires to be modified by offer of selective inducements.

While industry has not received any direct bounties from the Finance Minister, it has not been subjected to any onerous levies either Besides, the very size of the budget, and the consequent priming of the general economy, will generate new demands which industry should be able to exploit Wage earners in the organised sector, irrespective of the colour of their collars—or, of their ties—should not also be unhappy. Some of the imposts will press heavily on them (actually, Shri Dandavate, rather than Shri Charan Singh, is leaning more heavily on them); and they may with some justice resent that they should be taxed to put money into the pockets of their economic equals or betters in the rural sector. But these consequences may be somewhat mitigated if industry, as a whole, gets a boost, as is very likely. It is, however, curious that the budget makes no reference to a programme of major importance and urgency, said to be on the anvil. At periodical intervals, since the Janata Government assumed office, we have been hearing of the imminent introduction of a national network of shops for distribution of essential requirements at fair prices. A threat of inflationary price spiral is incipient in our economic situation. With our continued dependence on heavy doses of deficit finance, a plan for distribution of essential goods ready to be put into operation at short notice is imperative. The worst sufferers when prices get out of control will be the unorganised sector of labour and the rural landless masses, for whom the Finance Minister has been frequently voicing his concern.

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## OPINION

vol. XIX

20th MARCH 1979

No. 47

## THE PUBLIC VOICE

THE lady political scientist, pleasant-faced, middle-aged, in a purple sari with a wide embroidered border that befitted ber digneted lander. sari with a wide embroidered border that befitted her dignity, looked up from her paper and sighing deeply, shook her head. Said the smart young secretary, next below her in the queue at the bus station, "What oppresses you so heavily, dear lady? Some terrible calamity, no doubt. Come, speak up, let us also share your burden." "No, no, nothing really frightening" said the political scientist. "Only a deep saddening at the thought of how rarely men see things as they are, of how much influence just brouhaha and clever hypocrisy have on them Here we are, accepting at face value all the things Kosygin says about democracy, being peaceloving, non-interfering and our being ranged on the same side as he; and never even asking ourselves, now who is this very irenical character from whose lips there drips only milk and honey? Who is Kosygin, what is That all our Ministers fall for him, to adapt the words of a famous Jacobean song. If we did, we would find without taking any special pains, that he is the second most powerful tyrant in the world's most rigorous tyranny; that democracy means to him only rule by the tyrant; peace, the continuation of war by other means; non-interference the spreading of his creed in other lands and the making of them into satellites; that far from our being ranged on the same side as he, we can only be, by reason of our Constitution itself and of all the values we most cherish, entirely opposed to what he really is in practice and theory, whatever his hypocritical declarations, intended to deceive and successful in deceiving. Enough reason for sadness don't you think, to know all this and then to see what's been happening during his visit?"

"While I agree with you about the realities of the Soviet Government and of life under it, whether in the Soviet Union or in the Soviet satellites, the total absence of all civil rights for citizens, the crushing down of every freedom, the aggressive nature of the state internally and internationally, the Gulag Archipalego aspect," said the tall, thin, bespectacled economic journalist, "I don't agree that anything very damaging has been conceded by our Government. Some commercial agreements, some cultural agreements, a joint demand on China to withdraw from Vietnam forthwith and a great deal of 'how wonderful are you, oh lordly ones'. I myself would have avoided the joint demand; it puts us on record as being with what China calls, the Hegemonist, and against it, scarcely a sensible thing to do considering the state of our relations with China and our need to negotiate with it on boundary matters. For the rest, I would say run-of-the-mill."

"I would be happier if the prices had been mentioned in say, the crude oil-rice exchange agreement. Then at least we'd know how much rice was involved. We've done well in grain of recent years, but our dependence on the monsoon still remains, so it would be safer to know what we're letting ourselves in for. Quite apart from these minor points, I would, from my experience of over two years in Moscow and Kiev, question the soundness of the whole policy of wide-spread agreements with the Soviet Government. They mean that you throw the whole country open to its instruments. You know how the Soviet works through infiltration and subversion. At home and abroad it is the same technique. Infiltrate any organisation, however weak, not quite in line with the Soviet Government, subvert by threat or inducement one or two of its members, give them instructions to act in particular ways, and you've in effect taken it over. Moreover, for the Communist, as you know, politics is all, or if you like it better that way, all is politics. You think in compartments, poetry, art, atomic energy, long-distance running, tennis, chess. electric supply, etc. For the Soviet Government they are all equally parts of the great game, that of attaining the victory of its cause, the domination of its system in areas still outside its control. Its men and women sent abroad, expert in their vocations, are also expert in this special branch. Many of the key figures may be KGB, of the Soviet espionage service, or working under its instructions. Hence the danger of giving legitimate reason for Soviet agents to get mixed up on this wide scale in so many sections of India's life. Up to now we've been fortunate. The Indian by and large remains unaffected. But that does not mean we're safe for ever. Neglect proper safeguards, open wide your doors, your secret places, set the ostensible friend and real enemy right at the heart of your most private installations, and you may well see the recent Afghan drama enacted here, with suitable variations perhaps. I would say to the Prime Minister, 'O obstinate Morarji, enough is enough. Realise that, lest worse befall you and your country. Let the agreements that have been signed, lapse. Keep a very close watch on such Soviet citizens as are in the country and see that their numbers decline, not increase. Make all the declarations of firm and unshakable friendship you feel are necessary, but don't take them seriously yourself."

"I am inclined to agree wholly," said a white-haired, luxuriously-moustached, khadi-clad old gentleman leaning on his battered umbrella.

"The best comment. I think, on this Kosygin visit and all that followed, was what happened in the week preceding it. The Soviet Government had to rec two of its diplomats stationed in Delhi at the instance of the Government of India, who wanted them out for indulging in espionage activities." (It is well-known of course that at least sixty per cent of the diplomats at most Soviet embassies are KGB.) "The implications of Kosygin's firm friendship speeches properly are, 'you are undoubtedly our great friends, but naturally we shall spy upon you all we can.' Understanding this and the real Soviet aim one of you described, the Government of India should frame policy, not let itself be affected by spates of rhetoric and remembrance of acts the Soviet Union took in its own interest, which were also helpful to us."

"And the U.S. has no spies, you'll tell me next, and its embassies are not half-filled with CIA men, I suppose," said a handsome young lady in a kaftan and embroidered silk slippers. "Spying is part of diplomatic life, and I don't see why the poor Russians should be specially blamed and why we should take special precautions against them Good enough folk the Russians and even their Government, I should think, though from all that I've heard, I wouldn't want to emigrate there if I were compelled to leave this country. No the U.S. or Britain for me What's odd is that even the Communist leaders, who go there happily for free medical treatment, hate the thought of having to live there And it's not the climate too, for they are full of praises for that Very healthy, truly bracing, they call it."

"There's no doubt the U.S. and other nations too use spies." said the old gentleman, "and their embassies too have among their diplomats a certain number of CIA or corresponding men and women. The real difference is the U.S. or Britain have no faith or system to which they wish to convert us. We and they have the same faith and system, real democracy with all that implies, civil liberty, freedom of expression, independent judiciary, etc., etc. Consequently they aren't, whatever their spying, the same danger to us the Russians, with their passionate urge to convert and dominate are. Not, of course, that we should let the U.S. or Britain depart from proper diplomatic behaviour on that account. If they spy, etc., and we catch them, out with them too just as much as with the Russians. But I hope you see the difference."

"Apart from anything else, the Russians are dangerous because they keep and sustain their, in Stalin's words, 'shock-brigade' in this country, the CPI, which takes orders from them and acts for them. And let's not forget, the Soviet Government wholly approved of Mrs. Gandhi and her Emergency, they were her, raised a few hundred times, but they recognised the identity with them, and were very sorry she had to go", said the political scientist. "Tyranny, you know, has a very strong fellow-feeling with arbitrary and authoritarian rule, ah, there's our bus." And they all got in, their faces serious, their minds busy in thought.

#### SMALL BLISS

#### GAURI DESHPANDE

Engaged in domestic tasks severally we talk desultorily: last week's party rumours of a political marriage where to put unexpected guests elder's worrisome shenanigans younger's temper, hasty and uncertain; conversations which are continually disruptedby the day's unending demands then end in a long walk, visit with friends dinner on leftovers. . . . Before turning out the light on tired faces we smile --like passionate warriors -weary of wars embattled lovers rejoicing in rest and sav. wasn't that one of the good weekends! .....

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## OPÏNION

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No 48

## SCIENTIFIC JOURNALS GO ENGLISH

MAX AVERBACH

(In view of the attitude to English of high authority here, this article is of very special importance.—Ed.)

I is a painful but by now familiar fact that German does not play an important part any more as an international language.

The situation is brighter in the natural sciences, especially medicine. But even here there are signs of a move away from German, and this retreat, grotesquely, is taking place in Germany itself.

There have been several linguistic phases in the history of Western medical science. The original language of medicine was Greek, which was not replaced by Latin until the Middle Ages. Doctors' degree certificates were written in Latin right up to the middle of this century.

Yet national consciousness was already coming to the fore in the eighteenth century. The great French doctors of the revolutionary period wrote in French, and Latin was replaced by German in German-speaking areas. We are now, says Professor Herbert Lippert of Hanover medical college, entering a fourth linguistic phase His article appeared in *Medizinische Klinik*, a periodical specialising in clinical medicine.

Since the end of the Second World War English has become increasingly important. There is basically nothing new about this. It was difficult to do medical research ten or twenty years ago without a knowledge of English.

Today though, non-native speakers of English have to publish the results of their research in English if they want to reach a wide audience.

This is not all. For years an increasing number of German medical magazines have been asking authors to submit manuscripts in English.

Anglicisation has gone so far that a number of German medical magazines have translated their titles into English — Archiv für Kreislaufforschung, for example, has been renamed Basic Research in Cardio logy. After the Second World War the German language was beset by a wave of changes. Swiss medical magazines in particular used Latin titles instead of German, which had gained a bad name. They are now changing from Latin to English. New medical magazines adopt English titles from the start, especially when new areas of research are involved.

The 1977 Index Medicus lists 373 magazines in the German-speaking area. Only 51 per cent have a German title, 35 per cent have an English and twelve per cent still have a Latin title.

The position of English expressed in percentages would be even

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stronger if sub-titles, most of which are English, were counted.

There is great variation in the comparative strength of German in the four German-speaking countries. German accounts for only twelve per cent of the titles of medical magazines in Switzerland.

In the Federal Republic of Germany 65 per cent of medical magazines still have German titles and in the GDR the figure is 100 per cent.

This flattering difference can be interpreted politically. This is balanced by the fact that anglicisation has made greater progress in neutral Switzerland.

The international situation is even more discouraging. The Index Medicus for 1977 lists 2,378 magazines. Sixty-two per cent have English, 127 per cent Romance, 7.9 per cent Latin and 7.6 per cent Slav titles.

German's share is 8.2 per cent and the rest is shared by Hungarian, Finnish, Turkish, Japanese, Hebrew and miscellaneous titles.

The mere counting of titles does not say much about the scientific importance of the magazines concerned. By this criterion the significance of German is even less. According to an analysis by the Science Citation Index for scientific publications, the first-placed German language medical magazine comes 114th in world ratings.

Significantly, this magazine has since switched to English.

German was important 100 years ago. Many medical magazines published outside the German-speaking area had German titles and published articles in German.

This was particularly true of countries in Eastern Europe. But even a hundred years ago it must be admitted that English led the field. It has since increased its lead considerably.

Is the decline in the use of German as a language of medicine connected with German's defeat in two world wars? Professor Lippert looked into this and found that the decline in German has been going on steadily for the past fifty years.

There was a particularly steep decline in the thirties. It seems unlikely that there is a direct connection with the world wars, as French and other Romance languages spoken by the Allies have also declined in importance. The fact that political and economic factors are important is shown by the slow but sure increase in the importance of Russian.

English has only triumphed the past two decades (its share of total publications between 1879 and 1956 remained basically the same).

With English, the leading world language, scientists can reach the optimum number of readers, and specialist magazines, which have to be self-financing, can cover their costs.

Also, the English needed for scientific medical purposes can be relatively easily learnt whereas German is complicated, difficult to learn and less suitable as an international means of communication.

It is reassuring to note that German, after being displaced for a while by French and Latin, is now in second place again.

This could soon change, because the French are less inclined than we are to anglicise their language. And no one knows what is going to happen with Russian.





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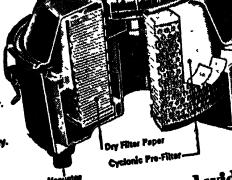
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In science it is not a question of personal feeling or favouring national languages but of the attempt to develop one means of communication for all.

This means of communication is and remains English, especially as artificial languages devised to date have failed to make any real impact.

Courtesy: Der Tagesspiegal and Dr. B. P. Adarkar

#### · VIEWS

The Railway Minister has adopted the course of in-M. M. Dave: creasing the season ticket fare for making good the loss the railway is said to be suffering on this account; but in case of any public sector undertaking the loss it has been suffering on a particular part of the service it renders is no ground for increasing the charge for it. The increase should be related to the capacity of the persons affected to bear the same. In urban areas like Bombay even the poorest have to use the suburban trains even though they are crowded to the maximum possible extent and the journey is in no way comfortable. If the Government's intention is to increase its revenue for whatever purpose, commendable or not, there are ways of doing so without making the poorest to suffer the most. It may be that those working in the organised sector may get adequate assistance in one form or the other, of which the Government will share the burden indirectly in the form of loss in its direct tax revenue; but the poorest unprivileged will be the real sufferers. If, however, the Government's intention is to ensure that only those who can bear the burden should be taxed to the extent they can, a very large income would be possibly realised by it by making the leave fare concessions enjoyed by those in the higher income group, chargeable to income tax. There are about fifty thousand executive directors, and other highly paid officers who draw about Rs. 5000 per year as leave fare concession for themselves and their families. If this is made taxable the Government would realise a sum of more than twentyfive crores every year. Every citizen in the unorganised group bears from his gross income the cost of his travel to his home town without any concession whatsoever. What then is wrong if the Government treats the leave fare concession, particularly in the case of those in the higher income group. as part of their taxable income?

#### FORM VIII

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## OPINION

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#### THE BUDGET

P. V. R. RA**O** 

(Continued from 14-3-1978)

THE problem, however, is the effective acceptance of discipline a Plan implies. Even when the same political party was in power both at the Centre and in the States, the Centre was rarely able to prevent many a State from embarking on unauthorised expenditure, which State autonomy may justify, and finance it by overdrawing on the nation's resources, which is what an overdraft on the Reserve Bank implies, and which no plea of State autonomy can justify! It will be optimistic to assume that the plea, and warning, of the Finance Minister during the course of his budget speech to States to be more prudent will have a better reception in the present political atmosphere. The realisation of the hopes implied in the budget will depend in a large measure on the ability of th€ Centre to control any recalcitrance, whether of a State Government or of a wayward Central Minister.

Two aspects of the rural programme may be noted here. The budget proposals recognise and make provision for increase in milk production, for exploitation of fisheries and for improvement in the conditions of scheduled castes and tribal people on a scale for which the Finance Minister deserves to be congratulated. It is doubtful, however, whether equal attention has been paid to another aspect of the rural programme, which may plunge the economy into serious difficulties unless the problem is carefully studied and remedial measures are taken in time. The massive and sustained effort to improve agricultural production is sound only if it is given proper direction. The country is now carrying an enormous stock of foodgrains, which it is finding difficult to protect and maintain. Production in the current year is expected to exceed last year's production by about ten million tons. Output next year may be expected to increase further with the increased investments proposed in agriculture. There is an argument whether the present stocks of grain represent a real surplus or are only evidence of a lack of purchasing power among large sections of the population. Also, it is only prudent that the country, dependent as its agriculture is on the vagaries of the monsoon, should carry as insurance an adequate grain reserve. With the prospects of the increase in the scale of production, clear thinking on the contents of our production programme is urgent. Failure to do so in the past has saddled the country with the dead load of surplus

sugar. The initial objective of the sugar policy may have been to protect the poor cultivators in the U.P. and Bihar and ensure adequate supply of indigenous sugar to the consuming public. The country is now faced with a situation in which the cultivator does not receive payment for the cane he grows and there is a glut of sugar which imposes a heavy strain on the economy, whether the stocks are carried or exported. And the preoccupation with foodgrains and sugar has resulted in inadequate attention to other items in urgent demand like edible oils and pulses. There is a limit to the capacity of the people to consume Present production levels with the normal growth thereon seem adequate for the country's needs in this respect. The extension of irrigation facilities has reduced the dependence of production on the While it would be wrong to be complacent and a careful watch must be maintained on the production and stock levels of cereals, a properly organised programme, to canalise additional production capacity the new investments will bring into being, to produce edible oilseeds, cotton and other agricultural raw materials or consumer requirements is an immediate necessity.

Power generation has received equal priority with agriculture in the formulation of the budget. The Finance Minister has claimed, as already mentioned, that full provision has been made for all on-going power schemes. During the present year, it is expected that about 2000 mws of power will be added, and during the ensuing year another 3500 mws, making the total generating capacity of 29000 mws. The budget for 1978-79 makes a provision for this purpose of Rs. 2,217 crores against Rs. 1925 crores during the current year. These figures may look impressive, but the adequacy of the effort requires to be viewed in the light of past experience and its impact on the economy. The Finance Minister has himself deplored the chronic shortage of power in the country, which he ascribes to inadequate financial provisions in past years and the slow pace of execution of power projects. He has pointed out the shortfall in industrial production and ascribed it largely to the shortage of power. Another equally important consequence of the shortage of power and the consequent reduction in the hours of working is the increase in the cost of production. One reason for the fall in demand which is besetting Industry is the high cost of production, and the shortage of power is bound to be an inhibiting factor on any efforts at improving efficiency of production. For more than a decade, actual demand for power has outstripped the forecasts about such demand, and power generation has lagged behind even the forecasts. Increase in production in the industrial sector and, to some extent, even in the agricultural sector, has as an essential requirement adequate availability of power.

The pace set by the Janata Government with regard to power generation is also disquieting. The Government began rather well, clearing, almost as soon as it assumed office, the long-pending project of Tatas for a super-thermal power station. There is no further information on how that project is progressing. Other projects of a similar nature seem

to be hanging fire between the Ministry of Energy and the Planning Commission; and these projects take considerable time to complete after they are sanctioned. Having regard to this tempo of work, some scepticism is permissible about the generating capacity that is expected to be commissioned this year and the next. The budget has cut through many cobwebs from the past, but has not apparently been able to do so with regard to power generation. The BHEL or individual State Electricity Boards cannot be permitted to exercise a veto on this vital programme. And this is a region where our growing foreign exchange reserves could be used with advantage. Perhaps, the Finance Ministry should underwrite the finances required to keep the BHEL capacity fully utilised for the next few years. With such guarantee, there seems to be scope for inviting proposals for execution of strictly time-bound turnkey projects for power generation from indigenous and foreign construction agencies individually or in collaboration. The rupee resources such a programme requires must be found either by diversion from fields where investment made may remain idle in the absence of power or by other means. One obvious way would be to seek participation of private capital by offering incentives the budget is offering for private capital invested in new Indian Companies Having regard to the fact that, except in the Kerala region, there is shortage of power throughout the country, it would be not sound planning to tailor power generation in the country to indigenous construction capacity and to press on, at the same time, with investments in other fields and keep such investments already made idle for want of power.

The budget proposals leave the private sector of industry severely alone. Actually, in the course of the current year, Government has exercised its powers to maintain a proper balance between the needs of the common citizen and of Industry. While presenting the previous budget, Shri Patel had envisaged a heavy drawl on the foreign exchange reserves. This implied a relaxation of controls and substantial import of goods from abroad. This was not done, except with regard to a few items like edible oil and synthetic fibre, where the internal prices rose to intolerable levels and then too, only to the extent necessary to maintain relative stability of prices. The earlier price rise was thus preserved to the advantage of Industry.

Notwithstanding this helpful attitude, Industry has been complaining of a recession of demand, underutilisation of capacity, increased interest charges, nonavailability of funds and of a general erosion of profit margins. Industry in this country has over the last thirty years developed rapidly in extremely sheltered conditions, thanks to the policy of planned development, and rapid industrialisation coupled with a great paucity of foreign exchange resources. With both imports and internal production severely controlled and limited, production costs became a secondary consideration. The consumer remained a hapless victim. But such situation could not continue indefinitely. The galloping price spiral in 1976 made Government at last realise that the consumer must

be protected. Industry, on its part, has to readjust itself to the new situation. Any process of adjustments is beset with difficulties; and Government policy is rightly aimed at mitigating them as far as possible.

The main effort must be by Industry itself to reduce costs through more efficient operations and modernisation of equipment and of techniques. The substantial expenditure Government has proposed to incur in 1978-79 should be of help to some extent in generating demand. Such increase in demand, leading to better utilisation of capacity, Government's programmes to increase power supply and to reduce interest rates will also help. On the other hand, the proposed levies on coal and electricity and the hike in excise will have an opposite effect. One important factor is the attitude of labour. Co-operation of organised labour is very necessary in any efforts at improving efficiency. Besides, if wage costs are to be maintained at reasonable levels, an effective distribution system of essential goods without any material increase over current prices is of great importance. Shri Patel has referred to the success attained by Government in its efforts last year in maintaining the relative stability of prices; and the proposed dose of heavy deficit finance makes it imperative that Government should persevere in its efforts in this field and organise a proper system of distribution.

The only positive proposal in the budget to assist the private industrial sector consists of concessions in respect of incometax on investments made in new Indian companies out of income or capital gains. It is doubtful whether the concessions are of much practical value. But the emphasis thus placed on new flotations seems to ignore that modernisation of existing production units and rehabilitation of the large number of sick units in certain sectors of Industry is equally important, and requires substantial capital, which many of them will be unable to raise. Extensions of the above concessions to such cases under adequate safeguards may both speed up modernisation needed to improve efficiency and reduce the burden on Government on account of sick industrial units it has taken over.

(To be concluded)

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## OPINION

ol. XVIII

21st March 1978

No. 48

#### THE BUDGET

P. V. R. RAO

(Continued from 14-3-1978)

THE problem, however, is the effective acceptance of discipline a Plan implies. Even when the same political party was in power both at the Centre and in the States, the Centre was rarely able to prevent many a State from embarking on unauthorised expenditure, which State autonomy may justify, and finance it by overdrawing on the nation's resources, which is what an overdraft on the Reserve Bank implies, and which no plea of State autonomy can justify! It will be optimistic to assume that the plea, and warning, of the Finance Minister during the course of his budget speech to States to be more prudent will have a better reception in the present political atmosphere. The realisation of the hopes implied in the budget will depend in a large measure on the ability of the Centre to control any recalcitrance, whether of a State Government or of a wayward Central Minister.

Two aspects of the rural programme may be noted here. The budget proposals recognise and make provision for increase in milk production, for exploitation of fisheries and for improvement in the conditions of scheduled castes and tribal people on a scale for which the Finance Minister deserves to be congratulated. It is doubtful, however, whether equal attention has been paid to another aspect of the rural programme, which may plunge the economy into serious difficulties unless the problem is carefully studied and remedial measures are taken in time. The massive and sustained effort to improve agricultural production is sound only if it is given proper direction. The country is now carrying an enormous stock of foodgrains, which it is finding difficult to protect and maintain. Production in the current year is expected to exceed last year's production by about ten million tons. Output next year may be expected to increase further with the increased investments proposed in agriculture. There is an argument whether the present stocks of grain represent a real surplus or are only evidence of a lack of purchasing power among large sections of the population. Also, it is only prudent that the country, dependent as its agriculture is on the vagaries of the monsoon, should carry as insurance an adequate grain reserve. With the prospects of the increase in the scale of production, clear thinking on the contents of our production programme is urgent. Failure to do so in the past has saddled the country with the dead load of surplus

sugar. The initial objective of the sugar policy may have been to protect the poor cultivators in the U.P. and Bihar and ensure adequate supply of indigenous sugar to the consuming public. The country 18 now faced with a situation in which the cultivator does not receive payment for the cane he grows and there is a glut of sugar which imposes a heavy strain on the economy, whether the stocks are carried or exported. And the preoccupation with foodgrains and sugar has resulted in inadequate attention to other items in urgent demand like edible oils and pulses. There is a limit to the capacity of the people to consume cereals. Present production levels with the normal growth thereon seem adequate for the country's needs in this respect. The extension of irrigation facilities has reduced the dependence of production on the While it would be wrong to be complacent and a careful watch must be maintained on the production and stock levels of cereals, a properly organised programme, to canalise additional production capacity the new investments will bring into being, to produce edible oilseeds, cotton and other agricultural raw materials or consumer requirements is an immediate necessity.

Power generation has received equal priority with agriculture in the formulation of the budget. The Finance Minister has claimed, as already mentioned, that full provision has been made for all on-going power schemes. During the present year, it is expected that about 2000 mws of power will be added, and during the ensuing year another 3500 mws, making the total generating capacity of 29000 mws. The budget for 1978-79 makes a provision for this purpose of Rs. 2,217 crores against Rs. 1925 crores during the current year. These figures may look impressive, but the adequacy of the effort requires to be viewed in the light of past experience and its impact on the economy. The Finance Minister has himself deplored the chronic shortage of power in the country, which he ascribes to inadequate financial provisions in past years and the slow pace of execution of power projects. He has pointed out the shortfall in industrial production and ascribed it largely to the shortage of power. Another equally important consequence of the shortage of power and the consequent reduction in the hours of working is the increase in the cost of production. One reason for the fall in demand which is besetting Industry is the high cost of production, and the shortage of power is bound to be an inhibiting factor on any efforts at improving efficiency of production. For more than a decade, actual demand for power has outstripped the forecasts about such demand, and power generation has lagged behind even the forecasts. Increase in production in the industrial sector and, to some extent, even in the agricultural sector, has as an essential requirement adequate availability of power.

The pace set by the Janata Government with regard to power generation is also disquieting. The Government began rather well, clearing, almost as soon as it assumed office, the long-pending project of Tatas for a super-thermal power station. There is no further information on how that project is progressing. Other projects of a similar nature seem

to be hanging fire between the Ministry of Energy and the Planning Commission; and these projects take considerable time to complete after they are sanctioned. Having regard to this tempo of work, some cepticism is permissible about the generating capacity that is expected to be commissioned this year and the next. The budget has cut through many cobwebs from the past, but has not apparently been able to do so with regard to power generation. The BHEL or individual State Electricity Boards cannot be permitted to exercise a veto on this vital programme And this is a region where our growing foreign exchange reserves could be used with advantage. Perhaps, the Finance Ministry should underwrite the finances required to keep the BHEL capacity fully utilised for the next few years. With such guarantee, there seems to be scope for inviting proposals for execution of strictly time-bound turnkey projects for power generation from indigenous and foreign construction agencies individually or in collaboration. The rupee resources such a programme requires must be found either by diversion from fields where investment made may remain idle in the absence of power or by other means. One obvious way would be to seek participation of private capital by offering incentives the budget is offering for private capital invested in new Indian Companies. Having regard to the fact that, except in the Kerala region, there is shortage of power throughout the country, it would be not sound planning to tailor power generation in the country to indigenous construction capacity and to press on, at the same time, with investments in other fields and keep such investments already made idle for want of power.

The budget proposals leave the private sector of industry severely alone. Actually, in the course of the current year, Government has exercised its powers to maintain a proper balance between the needs of the common citizen and of Industry. While presenting the previous budget, Shri Patel had envisaged a heavy drawl on the foreign exchange reserves. This implied a relaxation of controls and substantial import of goods from abroad. This was not done, except with regard to a few items like edible oil and synthetic fibre, where the internal prices rose to intolerable levels and then too, only to the extent necessary to maintain relative stability of prices. The earlier price rise was thus preserved to the advantage of Industry.

Notwithstanding this helpful attitude, Industry has been complaining of a recession of demand, underutilisation of capacity, increased interest charges, nonavailability of funds and of a general erosion of profit margins. Industry in this country has over the last thirty years developed rapidly in extremely sheltered conditions, thanks to the policy of planned development, and rapid industrialisation coupled with a great paucity of foreign exchange resources. With both imports and internal production severely controlled and limited, production costs became a secondary consideration. The consumer remained a hapless victim. But such situation could not continue indefinitely. The galloping price spiral in 1976 made Government at last realise that the consumer must

be protected. Industry, on its part, has to readjust itself to the new situation. Any process of adjustments is beset with difficulties; and Government policy is rightly aimed at mitigating them as far as possible.

The main effort must be by Industry itself to reduce costs through more efficient operations and modernisation of equipment and of techniques. The substantial expenditure Government has proposed to incur in 1978-79 should be of help to some extent in generating demand. Such increase in demand, leading to better utilisation of capacity, Government's programmes to increase power supply and to reduce interest rates will also help. On the other hand, the proposed levies on coal and electricity and the hike in excise will have an opposite effect. One important factor is the attitude of labour. Co-operation of organised labour is very necessary in any efforts at improving efficiency. Besides, if wage costs are to be maintained at reasonable levels, an effective distribution system of essential goods without any material increase over current prices is of great importance. Shri Patel has referred to the success attained by Government in its efforts last year in maintaining the relative stability of prices; and the proposed dose of heavy deficit finance makes it imperative that Government should persevere in its efforts in this field and organise a proper system of distribution.

The only positive proposal in the budget to assist the private industrial sector consists of concessions in respect of incometax on investments made in new Indian companies out of income or capital gains. It is doubtful whether the concessions are of much practical value. But the emphasis thus placed on new flotations seems to ignore that modernisation of existing production units and rehabilitation of the large number of sick units in certain sectors of Industry is equally important, and requires substantial capital, which many of them will be unable to raise. Extensions of the above concessions to such cases under adequate safeguards may both speed up modernisation needed to improve efficiency and reduce the burden on Government on account of sick industrial units it has taken over.

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

3rd APRIL 1979

No 49

#### OF CRIMINAL JUSTICE

AS our system of criminal justice broken down? Consider this. After a trial lasting about a year and a half, two very nefarious characters are found guilty of several offences by a judge and sentenced to two years rigorous imprisonment for each offence. The sentences having been pronounced, the men found guilty are not carried off to jail. Oh, no, they stand there, smiling at the judge, while their lawyers say they propose to appeal to the High Court and so their clients may be given bail until they do. Cheerfully or with a wry smile, knowing he is loosing two most unworthy types on society, the judge complies. Bail is given for a month, during which the appeal must be presented to the appropriate court. A day or two before the month ends, the lawyers present the appeals. Nobody appears on the State's behalf to show how ab initio there is no substance in the appeals and they do not deserve to be admitted at all That presumably would be against established convention. The appeals are admitted, and bail granted until they are heard and decided.

When will that be? In a week, a month, six months, nine? The ordinary unsophisticated citizen is anxious to know. Tut, says high legal authority, in time, in time, and, sotto voce, deprecatingly, these laymen are the limit, aren't they? The laymen, puzzled and bewildered, very conscious of the truth of the old maxim that justice delayed is justice denied, discovers through the kind offices of some knowledgeable friends that in this particular High Court there are already pending 1013 criminal appeals, so if no other intervenes, these may well be 1014-A and 1014-B; for hearing they must await their turn; ha, ha, laugh the kind friends, you'll be lucky if they're taken up within two years. And, meanwhile, the nefarious characters found guilty by the judge after long, painstaking and fair trial, what about them? Why they're on bail, and will remain on bail, cavorting freely in their own nefarious ways if they choose to, the trial and sentences fast becoming just a fading memory to them.

How, when this kind of thing is common, can anyone have confidence in the system of criminal justice? And if confidence is destroyed thus in the system, what can the aggrieved citizen do except have recourse to private vengeance? The hearing and decision of a criminal appeal in a month after it is filed would be reasonable; in two months, it would be tolerable. Beyond that, the instrument for giving justice to the aggrieved, the High Court, becomes an instrument for oppressing the aggrieved and favouring the criminal. With so many adjudged criminals free on bail because their appeals are still to be heard by the High Courts

(the position in other High Courts in this respect is said not to be better), may it not be validly said that the law and order situation too is very probably detrimentally affected? Another aspect of this condition cannot be neglected. When such delay is the rule rather than the exception in the very temples of justice, what effect can the exhortations about the importance of prompt disposal by its functioning priests have on those lesser authorities they control in the field of criminal justice within their jurisdictions? May not the answer of at least some of them be, "Physician heal thyself"?

#### AT THE HOSPITAL

J AYAPRAKASHJI is the most beloved Indian alive. He deserves to be, for his goodness is almost pulpable. has also been inestimable. That therefore crowds should flock to the hospital where he is being treated and enquire about his health is natural That in these crowds there should also be some politicians is equally natural. But does not an element of hysteria creep in, when for days on end Chief and other ministers and high-ranking party politicians neglecting their proper duties — a fact which JP would be the first to deplore - crowd the hospital foyer and corridors? Their presence is of no use to him; it does not help in the least in his cure. Their prayers for his recovery could be said wherever they were, and would no doubt be equally efficacious. Again, is there not an element of self-advertisement in the visits of many eminent men, politicians and others, who go to the hospital and are photographed there, so that their pictures may appear in the papers next day? I say nothing of the caballing that inevitably takes place when numbers of politicians gather together, but the foyer of the hospital can scarcely be free of it all. Avoid and abandon all these shenanigans if you are really friends and well-wishers of JP, the sincere, the unostentatious, oh good Indians. By them you do him no good, and show yourselves unworthy to be his countrymen.

#### REFLECTION

THE Old Man, reviewing the evening, found himself somewhat abashed In younger and sympathetic company, he had talked too much of himself. His childhood, the values he inherited, his training in the service, its special values, his life thereafter and the principles on which its work was founded, public interest, sound comment etc., etc., all he had at least mentioned, some dwelt on longer.

Then came the perceptive question, and how do you avoid hubris? (Hubris is the pride that brings its own Nemesis, retributive justice) The old man had answered, "by not being proud, by not thinking anything of myself, by convincing myself that what I do is nothing out of the ordinary, in fact one only does what one can so there's nothing extraordinary about it, by keeping a low profile generally." That served on the spur of the moment. Now, the old man thought the proper answer, as it was the true, should have been, by trying to live up to:

"But thou, want not, ask not. Find full reward of right In doing right. Let right Deeds be thy motive, not The fruits thereof; and live In action, labour. Make thy acts thy piety, Contemning gain and merit, Equable in good and ill."

A terrible thing indeed is hubris at any stage of a person's life; more so in age, when the reasoning faculty tends to be weaker. Rightly did the Greeks say "Call no man happy until he is dead; at best call him but fortunate." Who knows at what late stage, a man may become subject to hubris, overweening pride, and so suffer its Nemesis in disgrace and downfall? God's mercy be upon us all?

#### VIEWS

Sheila Sumant: I just cannot understand why our politicians are so much agitated and lose their sleep over this Sino-Soviet-Vietnam conflict when there are more important issues to worry about right in our own country. Let these three monsters fight amongst themselves, and may be, out of this fight, democratic forces might emerge in their respective countries!

Why should we yell about who attacked whom first? Vietnam 'punished' Cambodia, China 'punished' Vietnam for 'punishing' Cambodia, and Russia was about to 'punish' China for 'punishing' Vietnam, but China declared unilateral 'ceasefire' in time.

Russia wants to enjoy suzerainty over the whole of Eastern Europe, China over the entire South East Asia and Vietnam over the entire Indo-China! Why should we involve ourselves in this quarrel amongst these three ruthless and totalitarian regimes which want to enslave the entire world? Let us mind our own business. Let us also not forget that Vietnam completely let us down when China attacked us; on the contrary, Vietnam supported China!

China has now not only succeeded in 'punishing' Vietnam, but also in proving that Soviet Russia is just a 'paper polar bear', an undependable ally and that the friendship treaty with Soviet Russia is just a worthless scrap of paper! In other words, it was a plain warning to India that our friendship treaty with Russia was worthless and therefore India and China should settle their disputes bilaterally!

Beyond expressing sympathy and demonstrating solidarity with Vietnam, the rest of the world just looked on helplessly! Our fate will not be different if and when China thinks of punishing India next! Unless India becomes self-reliant and a nuclear power, we may not survive as a nation.

Bill Aitken: Outside our house in what is called "a posh South Delhi colony" (though how open drains qualify as posh beats me), there

are four jungly pups sporting with their mother. The little park is fenced and in the afternoon becomes the meeting place of all the off-duty ayahs and khansamas. The mali deputed to watering the fringe of Eucalyptus uses the tap to bathe and wash his dhoti. For the family of dogs however the park is their home. They were born here and now they live, sleep and play here. And how they play. The delicious, joyful abandon of puppies with no food, no shelter, no father, no prospects is something to be witnessed. Their freedom is infectious and the other dogs in the colony, usually drooping and sad, join in the romp and for once in their lives (for every dog has his day) their tails are up and they paw the ground as though they were Corporation token-holders.

A foreign memsahib embarrasses the group of relaxing servants by arriving in a taxi with tidbits to feed the pups Perhaps they feel awkward because they have been conditioned to associate mad dogs with the English and she is from an Eastern embassy. Like most dogs the mother of the pups greets the well-dressed lady with affection. Let a poorly dressed person come near and she bares her teeth and will give chase if he's on a bicycle Dogs apparently do not subscribe to utopian socialism. Once the mem tried taking the four pups away in a box to give them a good home. But the mother presumably cried outside her gate so piteously that she had to acknowledge the realities of being born free.

In considering the cavorting of these pups there is a lesson for the business tycoon who purrs past in the statutory Mercedes, giving himself ulcers to pave his home in marble and (like Lenin) his lavatory with gold

Mr. Bhupesh Gupta today said that his party had made a mistake in not asking for Mrs. Indira Gandhi's resignation after the Allahabad High Court judgment unseating her in June, 1975. Mr. Gupta said the CPI had also committed a mistake in extending its support to the proclamation of emergency and recalled that the party had regretted it at its highest forum. "We do not want to commit another mistake," he said while extending his party's general support to the bill. Mr. Gupta said the entire country had opposed the emergency by voting Mrs. Gandhi out of power. The entire parliament had opposed it. Mrs. Gandhi was the only person who had not yet regretted her mistake. She should have done so gracefully. He advised Congress (I) members to join him in self-examination and admit the mistake.

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## OPINION

ol. XIX

10th APRIL 1979

No. 50

#### BRITAIN ON THE BRINK

Taya Zinkin

London 26-3-'79

**B** RITAIN is on the brink of elections. Varoomshka, the Guardian's weekly cartoon, like those frogs which indicate the weather, though unlike them sexily attractive, is an excellent barometer of what those Left of Centre think.

That cartoon, which is very popular has, over the past year or so, been drifting steadily to the Right—as indeed much of what goes into the newspaper (except on educational and cultural matters). Ten years ago the Guardian heroes were Michael Foot and Wedgewood Benn and their staff used to sniff neo-colonialism under every carpet, Trade Unions used to be the Guardian's sacred cows. Over time, thanks to the behaviour of those heroes, light has dawned.

On March 24th, Varoomshka-whose name means the question-asker in Saxo-Russian—spoke up She was anticipating the outcome of the tabled vote of no confidence in Mr Callaghan's Cabinet The cartoon began with a grim Jim faced by Death holding an hour-glass with the sands run out Varoomshka enquires of a troubled Foot what will happen if he loses the elections "Jim will be forced to retire to his Sussex farm." And Jim mutters that this would be disastrous—to which Foot agrees saying it would be disastrous for the farm and adding that Labour would then have to wait five long years and would have to revamp all their policies before it could return to power Only then interjects a smug Wedgewood Benn can Labour give Britain something to look forward to. And when Varoomshka asks what that something is a tyrannical looking Benn gloats "19841". In other words Varoomshka has been telling Guardian readers to vote Tory Such a straight attack on Labour in the Guardian made my emotions boggle, its readership is so divided between Liberals, Labour Marxists, Trotskyites, Maoists and Bennites! Moreover I did not think that the cartoonist was being fair to Jim-who after all did try his hardest. But I had to applaud the attack on Wedgy Benn.

Mr. Benn's track record ought to earn him a Stalin Prize He has done more than any single politician to drag Britain—the most industrialised country and still one of the major powers after the War—to the unenviable position of being the first underdeveloping country.

First, as Post Master General, Mr. Benn nibbled at the efficiency of

a service which used to be known throughout the world for its unparallelled excellence. Not so alas now. During the last month 5 letters, and one posted cheque failed to reach me, that I actually know of. A post office official explained this away by the low level of recruits (yet there is so much educated unemployment one is told). But it was as Minister in charge of Industry that Mr. Benn set out, quite deliberately, to do his worst. He lent Leyland the £25 million which clinched the British Motor Corporation take-over, building a gigantic Frankenstein lame duck of such nightmarish behaviour, of such pathetically low perfor mance that it has ruined Britain's reputation for quality. Besides rescuing bad firms and fostering lame-duckery he refused to close steel plants which were devouring astronomically large subsidies and had to be closed in the end just the same. He has consistently bled the taxpayer, damaged sterling, destroyed incentives and penalised enterprise by piling indefensible subsidies upon indefensible subsidies—to produce inflation—instead of Rationalising production and using the money on He has systematically encouraged, indeed bribed with promises of financial support, workers to form uneconomic cooperatives which still fail to justify the millions that he kept pouring down their drains.

Then, as Minister for Energy, Mr. Benn deliberately chose the wrong nuclear reactor because its design was American. To pamper the miners he insisted on building a coal fired power station, preventing an efficient firm from taking over a less efficient one. His policy to keep open uneconomic mines is the same as his old policy to keep going uneconomic steel plants and it naturally has the same results—and objectives to increase inflation and reduce productivity.

Finally, in his dealings with the oil companies involved in developing North Sec Oil he has screwed the terms so much that it has retarded oil production and shattered the traditional belief that Britain's word was her bond. And all the while, whether it was Wilson or Callaghan he has been consistently disloyal to his leader, worming his way into the left, behaving like an illfamed Trojan horse and Fifth column rolled into one. Indeed, of late, his disloyalty has become so blatant that Callaghan has been forced to repudiate him publicly and tell him to shut up—even cancelling one of his scheduled performances. Benn is like Krishna Menon, with the difference that there were some things Krishna Menon did well, like talking with Nehru's second voice, and commissioning the building of pressure cookers in defense factories. I still have to set eves on a pressure cooker bearing Mr. Benn's stamp and, under British conditions, ventriloquism is not required. Unfortunately, Mr. Benn has been more successful than Krishna Menon.

Thanks, in very large part to his tireless efforts on the economic, industrial and trade union fronts, Britain is now seventh in the League Table of the European Community, ahead of Ireland and Italy, a shameful state for which Wedgy Benn can take between 40 and 50 per cent of the credit. The balance goes to the fact that since the War the Conservatives, when in office, have been more concerned with paternalism than

with growth and have done nothing to set enterprise free. Moreover, since 1964, Britain has had one socialist government after the other, under Labour and Tories alike. Ted Heath's policies were socialist, only his hat was Conservative.

As elections are beginning to loom imminent it is to be hoped that Margaret Thatcher can redress the downward spiral—she has none of Heath's ambivalences. Wilson's deviousness or Benn's cunning (cunning which has made it impossible for Callaghan to sack him). The Iron Maiden stands for time proved virtues: hard work, thrift, self-reliance, just reward and caring for those who deserve, as distinct from those who demand, help. Against her she has all the Benns under the Trade Union carpets. For her she has the silent majority which is at last beginning to realise that "silence is golden" was coined by the enemies of the masses, the world over

#### **VIEWS**

The significance and effect of the President's recent speech to the Federation of Indian Chambers of Commerce and Industry would have been much greater if to the pound of exhortation it contained, he had added a few ounces of example. Thus after talking about the indifference of the affluent to the poor and their ostentatious expenditure in the face of the abject poverty around them, he could have said "I too am, as you know, very well paid. Hereafter, I have resolved to spend not more than two thousand rupees a month on myself and my family and to set aside the rest of my income for the relief of the poor. I also propose to suggest to my Government that an Expenditure Tax be levied on all Indians, whose expenditure exceeds two thousand a month or twenty-four thousand a year, the rate of levey being the same as for an income of that amount, and rising in the same way as for higher incomes. This should be of considerable help in preventing conspicuous consumption."

Again, where he talks of black money and elections, he could have added, "I see no reason at all for political parties to turn to rich men for their election funds. It seems to me quite feasible for a large political party to have say twenty lakh registered members, each of whom pays it twelve rupees a year. This means about four thousand members in each of our parliamentary constituencies. Ten crores every five years, after meeting costs of collection, District offices etc., is surely sufficient to cover the reasonable election expenses of the candidates of any political party. This will mean the almost complete removal of big money-power from the electoral field, with great benefit to the true interest of the country.."

M. A. Rahimtoola: Justification for the summary trials and executions by Ayatoollah Khomeini's regime of the Iranian generals may be possible but his calls for the blood of Dr. Shahpour Bakhtiar coming from

a man of God are quite out of character. Dr. Bakhtiar, it must be remembered, immediately went about during his short stay, in remedying the more outrageous features of the Shah's times including disbandment of the hated secret police and the freeing of political prisoners. His only crime then seems to have been to call on Dr. Khomeini to stake his claim to the governance of the country in a more orderly fashion at the next elections.

Since it would be less than fair to think of the good Ayatoollah as being unaware of the constantly recurring advice in the Quran when dealing with the subject of punishment that "it is better to forgive", one can only be led to conclude that his harsh, incongruent calls in the matter arise out of a desire for personal vengeance.

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# OPINÍON

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#### THE PUBLIC VOICE

66T THINK you all agree with me that self-government, however **L** indifferent, is preferable, nay infinitely preferable, to government by others, dictatorship, oligarchy, whatever name you call it, native or foreign. The latter is, of course, even more intolerable. It isn't a question of the results produced; those of the other forms may sometimes be better, at least in the short term. No it's just that the free mind-in which category I hope I include rightly all of us here—just cannot tolerate the idea of being under authoritarian, undemocratic government," said a white-haired, luxuriously-moustached, khadi-clad old gentleman, looking up from his newspaper as he stood in the queue at the busterminus "That I think is quite clear. What troubles me however is the question. Must self-government necessarily be as bad as it is with us here; must we always suffer from such mefficiency and bumbledom? Take for instance the electricity shortage that has paralysed West Bengal and Calcutta. Why? Is there not enough installed capacity? There is ample. The fault lies elsewhere, with simple things, maintenance, supervision, perhaps lack of essential spares, in brief Negligence, the little men not doing their jobs as they should, those above not bothering to check what was happening, the top men sitting at ease, relying on routine and politicking. What, in Heaven's name, is the good of spending thousands of crores each year on increasing capacity, when of the capacity already installed you use only about sixty per cent, because of your own misfeasances, not because there is no demand? This same kind of thing occurs in other spheres, too. So what do you think, must we become reconciled to it as a way of life, as something inevitable under selfgovernment, or . . . ?"

"Let me tell you my own recent experience. I have had to travel a good deal by passenger trains in the interior during the last month. Always, I took a first-class ticket. Generally my first-class compartment was devoid of all fittings, no switches, no fans, just two lights cabined-in so that they burnt, night and day, an extremely dirty bath-room, made even more unusable by crowds of second-class passengers forcing their way in at every station in the morning and taking their turns in the bath-room, exhausting all the water, the railway staff just looking-on, saying not a word, regarding it rather as a matter-of-course, I cowering in a corner most of the time. Very different indeed from my train-journey in these and similar parts in the early forties, when two fans worked, your berth

had a reading-lamp, no one encroached on your bath-room or your privacy, enough water was available for your needs, and travelling first by passenger trains was, if not a joy, at least legitimately comfortable. During the long hours in the arid compartments, I thought about it, why the difference? I came to the same conclusion as you, basically negligence, the little men in maintenance and traffic not doing their jobs as they should, the supervisors slack and/or afraid, causing in the ordinary traveller over the years the feeling that he need observe no restraints, could do whatever he liked, force his way in anywhere. I don't blame the Railway Minister or even the Railway Board. They no doubt do the best they can, but there's something in the air. Yes, I think I would answer your question in the affirmative after my experience. There's no help but to regard this kind of thing as the way of life under our self-government," said a scholarly-looking, grey-haired man, with a couple of books under his arm.

"No, no," said the young bright looking secretary, carrying a very smart briefcase. "You take much too pessimistic a view. I don't challenge the facts both of you have narrated. Things are like that undoubtedly. There is plenty of negligence, if not worse, in quite a number of spheres. But we needn't despair. It is not unmendable. And after all this is self-government, we in effect are the rulers. If in our rule negligence prevails, who is to blame but ourselves? Ruling, we must realise, is not an easy matter. Its obligations are not discharged by voting once in five years for our favourite candidate or party and not bothering about public affairs thereafter. We must organise, we must take the assistance of the best-informed people outside government on each important subject, we must keep an eye on developments or non-developments, we must make governments feel they must be on their toes, because we're on our tocs watching them, and will come down on them like a ton of bricks whenever we find them neglectful or failing in their duty. It all sounds very difficult. It would all cost money and need devoted workers. I know that, but I also know that if we the people, or the better-educated among them, don't do this, the present dry-rot in many spheres must continue and will have to be accepted as a way of life."

"A truly heroic prescription, my dear," said the pleasant-faced, middle-aged lady political scientist from her place beyond the old gentleman, "and one for real heroes and heroines, alas! Most of us are, however, very far from being that. Our interest in public affairs, too, can at best be partial. They cannot occupy our minds to the exclusion of all our other interests, professional, personal, etc. I agree that we must not be 'idiodes' in the Greek sense, that is citizens who despite having full citizenship rights, opt out of their public responsibilities, but we can't at the same time say that for us "good government is all". We have to consider the rest of life, too, and that can in most cases leave us only a small modicum of time for the kind of activities you envisage. So unless you can get together quite a number of single-minded enthusiasts like yourself, preferably with the same absence of domestic ties, your ideas, I am afraid, will not be practical. However don't let me put you off.

The effort may well be worthwhile, and as you no doubt know, 'not failure but low aim is crime'."

"While what you say is very largely correct," said the thin-faced, bespectacled economic journalist, "Don't let us forget that unless we devote a fair portion of our time to public affairs and their improvement, the rest of our time may also be detrimentally affected to our great disadvantage, the rot moving on from the public affairs sphere to others touching us more nearly, education, transport, employment, etc. etc. In the modern age, government is the key, if not to all, at least to a great part of the all Let me give you one more field in which present conditions are utterly disgraceful. This is criminal justice, the hall-mark of which is delay, delay and delay. Delay in investigation is followed by delay in trial, delay in hearing appeal if convicted, delay in further appeal or revision, delay in deciding on miscellaneous matters that may be raised. In brief, the rule becomes put off, postpone, give a date, anything but hear the matter from day to day and decide. The reason for this deplorable lapse from proper standards of justice is said to be insufficient personnel at all levels, leading to a backlog everywhere, which defies substantial reduction. Why this should be so, I find difficult to understand. To a simple mind like mine, it would seem to be a question of assessing the average work potential of say an average judge. deciding in what time the backlog must be got rid off, appointing for that period the necessary number of extra judges, and with all due deference, keeping them upto the mark. It would mean more expenditure, but surely that should be a matter of little moment, compared with the disgrace of having free on bail two or more convicted and sentenced criminals for two years because their appeals are unlikely to be heard earlier. Another powerful cause of delay, rarely mentioned, is the convenience of lawyers. It does not suit X to agree a matter on a date fixed, so a postponement. It does not suit Y to argue it on the postponed date. So another postponement, all of course with due regard to expeditious disposal and the time-honoured maxim of Justice delayed being justice denied. I have very little doubt that provided we, the public, take a great deal of trouble, Government can be made to bring about substantial improvement in this matter, and unconscionable delay in criminal justice need not become a part of our way of life."

"Ah, well," said the old gentleman, "it seems fairly clear from what we've heard that a great deal of what is wrong can be repaired, if we, ordinary citizens, devote sufficiently our minds, time, study and money in rightly-oriented effort to the task. Of course, it will be difficult; of course there'll be vested interests opposing; of course some of us will falter and fall back, but I think that if a sufficient number of you, the middle-aged and the young, take it up in earnest, substantial success will crown your efforts. Remember the stakes are high, a better life for you and the country, and proof that under our self-government, existence need not be either dark or brutish, but can be reasonably civilised and pleasant. Well, here's the bus." Before anybody else could speak, the bus rolled up, and they all took their regular seats and relaxed.

#### VIEW

Gauri Deshpande: Now that it seems practically certain that the life of the Paynar mahatma will be saved for a few more useless years, we, the alert citizens of India wish to attract the attention of the powers that be to Article 48 of the Directive Principles. It says: "The state shall endeavour to organise agriculture and animal husbandry on modern and scientific lines and shall, in particular, take steps for preserving and improving the breeds, and prohibiting the slaughter of cows and calves and other milch and draught cattle." Setting aside such important considerations as India's vaunted (and obviously hypocritical) secularism, the government's total inability to do anything about the first part of this directive and the advisability of not giving in to such blackmail, we now await the total ban on goat slaughter (milch animal) and buffalo slaughter (both milch and draught). Just as the mahatma of Pavnar equated his life with that of bullocks and cows and put it on the line for them (whether an intake of 900 calories constitutes a fast unto death for a man in his eighties, shall not be considered here), are not any other great souls going to come forward to represent the goat and the buffalo?

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# OPINION

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#### A LONG-PAST RIOT

THE old man sat up with a start. As sleep gradually faded from his mind and eyes, he realised he was in a comfortable bed-room in the middle hours of a dark night and not in the narrow central street of a district town bazar in mid-afternoon on a torridly-hot summer's day. Splashing his face with water, he frowned at himself in the mirror over the basin and murmured. "Old dotard, still dreaming! Surely you should have got over that by now" Making his way to the sofa in the verandah that overlooked the garden, he sank back into it and said, "Ah yes, all that talk this evening about riots, communal and other, that must have brought back this memory of my first. How many did I have to deal with, three, no four, that is not counting the two that were spiflicated because of previous information and personal intervention in good time, rendered into non-events in fact. Those were the best, of course. God, I was thankful they ended as they did. Good for the people, good for me. Good feeling restored between the parties, no trouble from officials etc., and no paper-work, reports, declarations, appearances in courts etc., for me. Just a clean straight job, humane, over and done with. Steps taken not always within the straight bounds of legality, but invariably informed by the spirit of fair-play and justice. No, no, my dreams would not be trouble by them.

"That first one was very different. I had taken over the sub-division just two months before, been out on tour, and had come in to headquarters about two weeks ago. There I sat in my office at two on a very hot afternoon, the temperature around ninety-three in the shade, with the long cloth punkah fitfully flapping above my head, listening to the pleading of a particularly vociferous lawyer, whose energetic gesturing in that heat aroused my admiration despite the evident fallacies in his argument. His client drowsed on his feet, as did the guard by his side, the naik at the door and even the second judicial clerk over his papers. The old

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sheristedar, listening, shook his head from time to time, and finally looked at the clock and meaningly at me as if to say 'and how long are you going to let this exhibition go on?' I nodded and smiled but decided to say nothing as I could see counsel was running out of steam and would soon come to a halt of his own accord. He got a few minutes later to 'Finally, your honour . . .' to be interrupted by a bare-headed man with long, flowing locks who rushed into the room shouting, 'Oh, sir, they are burning, looting and killing. Do something, any thing.' The naik took him by the shoulders and shook him into some semblance of coherence in a few moments. Then it appeared that the burning etc., was going on at the cross-roads of the main bazar, that the Muslims were attacking the Hindus and the Hindus were burning the Muslim shops.

"What had happened, how it had started didn't matter, the need was for action. I shouted to the butler for my gun-case. He rushed in, putting the double-barrelled Greener together and handing it to me, stuffed the side-pockets of my shorts with 12-bore cartridges. Meanwhile, the Subedar in charge of the eight man armed guard that had brought in the prisoners had been called in by the naik. I told him he and six of his men must come with me at once, there was a riot in the bazar. Certainly, he agreed. but he was in charge of and responsible for the prisoners, sixteen of them, with six or so quite desperate characters. Ah, said I don't worry, Naik Mahomed Khan, veteran of a hundred battles, will be in charge. He, with your two men, will be quite enough for twenty. Come, come on. And I hurried down the long avenue leading to the gate of the bungalow. Glancing back on reaching it, I found him and his six just behind me. I started to run and they followed. The bazar was a quarter of a mile from the bungalow, and as we got near it, we heard an ominous hum. Entering it, we formed a line right across the street, I in the centre, the subedar next to me. 'Now, said I, 'our purpose is to stop all nastiness. Don't shoot unless I call out to you loudly, and when I do, fire all together. Remember, aim below the knee if you can.'

"Steadily as if on parade, we marched on and soon saw fires burning on the farther side of the chowk and a fighting, jostling, whirling mob, with many carrying and using axes and lorhs, moving towards us, a few detaching themselves with torches in their hands to fire the shops on either side as they advanced. I halted my men, moved three paces forward and in the truly stentorian voice that I had then (they used to 'Oh you unworthy, you miserable miscreants, stop this at once and scatter. say if I challenged in anger, I could be heard in the next taluka), shouted The sarkar, for whom I speak, demands it. If you do this, your wretched lives will be safe now, though the law will take its course later. If you do not, see what I have for you.' And to the men behind me in the same loud voice, 'prepare to fire,' then after a pause 'aim'. For a moment, the crowd seemed to hearken; I saw more than one blood-stained axe grounded. Then suddenly there came a great roar of laughter and cry. 'What does the insolvent fellow think? Mince-meat, aye mince-meat is what we'll make of you all.' A number of them started moving speedily towards us their axes at the ready, and the whole lot followed. When

their first ranks were about ten paces away, I shouted again 'Beware, oh fools,' and then as they still came on, to the men behind 'fire'. At the same time, I lifted my gun and emptied both barrels into the mob. Several men tumbled down and the crowd paused. I, in a lower voice to the guard behind me, 'reload,' 'prepare to fire,' and as they did that, reloaded my own gun too with its bird-shot, watching the crowd carefully. Some of those in front gave way suddenly to a pressure from behind, and there was a quick surge towards us, threatening to engulf us. Quickly I shouted 'fire,' letting off both barrels of my twelve-bore. Almost at my feet one of the leaders collapsed. Several others fell too and the mob turned and fled.

"Then came the aftermath. A guard was despatched to the doctor-incharge of the local hospital with a hurried note 'Please come at once with necessary equipment and medicines. Bullet-wounds and axe-wounds. Also, some burns perhaps. Immediate. Greatly obliged.' From the hospital, the bungalow was quite near, so the guard was asked to go over and request Pribhdas, the sheristedar, to come at once with his tools, pens, ink, forms, writing paper etc. The subedar with one guard was dispatched to walk through the bazar from end to end, both lengthwise and breadthwise and see that nothing was still amiss. They were to note any places where bodies were lying around, and get some local resident to look after any wounded. If there were any fires still burning, they were to get local assistance to try and put them out. They were also to find out what had happened to the police-station at the other end of the bazar. Why hadn't its force turned out? At the last minute, an extra guard was attached to the subedar in case he had to send an urgent message, back.

"And now to see to the wounded. Eight men lay on the ground, some groaning though unconscious, some silent. The first was obviously dead. I felt his pulse, his heart, looked into his eyes, the spirit had clearly fled. So with a murmured 'God have mercy upon his soul,' I turned to the next. He was unconscious but not too badly hurt. He seemed to have escaped with just a peppering of bird-shot. Four of the others seemed to have been shot in the lower leg, one in the stomach, and one who had got a bullet right through his heart, was dead. And so I stood there looking at the carnage I had wrought, and of a sudden began arguing with God. God, I said, you are responsible for this, not I. Could you not have made them listen to my warnings? Could you not have prevented them from taking to the evil course they did? You did neither. Lord, and so I am a murderer Lord, for however much I reassure myself that I was only doing my duty, yet God, I have killed, and killed these who did me personally no injury. Oh Lord . . . and I stood there, my mind a blank, my palms outstretched in supplication. enough,' said Pribhdas, the sheristedar, the Sufi, quite sternly, 'I have heard you and I say enough, this trend of thought can only lead to madness and I am sure it is not in the public interest that you should travel that path. You say these men who lie here and their fellows have not injured you personally. I say they have most grievously. For what

our jurisdiction, however mean or poor. And he who injures wantonly any person, for whose safety you are responsible, does he not injure you too personally? Of course he does. So I say enough of this. And now, sir, you sent for me?' 'Yes, I did. Dying declarations, that is the first thing, I suppose These five, wounded below the knee we may take later, but the one with the bullet through his belly, his statement I think must come first. Ah see, he is regaining consciousness. Now, as I question him, will you take down the answers?' 'I am afraid, sir, a dying declaration must be in the handwriting of the person to whom it is made, and particularly if he is a magistrate,' said Pribhdas. 'Here is paper, pen and ink'.

В

"So I sat down on the ground, next to the man, and as he groaned, interrupted him with 'the physician has been sent for. He will be here soon and no doubt you may be well again. But, meanwhile, life being uncertain, and you, as you can see, badly wounded, perhaps you may like to make a statement about yourself and the part you played in this unfortunate business. At least, you may like to inform your family and friends. So, sir, if you wish to make a statement, I, a magistrate, am here to record it. If you do not, let it be as you please.' 'Oh, yes, I'll make a statement', said the man feebly, 'I am A from village X. I came into town to buy some special seed. I bought it and to while away the hot afternoon hours, sat down in the shade at the tandoori shop where I had had my lunch. Suddenly a few men rushed by, a cry arose the Hindus are killing the Muslims, and I found myself axe in hand, chopping down the next door shopkeeper, with whom I had exchanged greetings earlier in the day. I don't know what madness overpowered me. But then I saw some Hindus fall upon two innocent Muslim wayfarers and I rushed to their help. Soon, it was a free for all, men just poured in and fought and we gave no quarter either way. You will find the bazar littered with bodies, I should think. And when your shout came soaring in, we stopped and looked, then seeing you were but eight laughed mightily and said, a small mouthful for both of us. Let us polish it off first and then return to our own fight. And so I was one the leaders in the crowd and got this packet Ah well, it was my destiny. So let me die in peace. Don't try and patch me and put me up in court. I have in any case been weary of life, since my wife died a year ago. Allah is merciful. He will let me see her again.' And he extended his hand willingly, when Pribhdas sought to ink his right thumb and affix it on the paper on which I had recorded his statement. I attested the impression, and as I turned away, he gave a great sigh and his soul left Pribhdas gently closed his eyes and gaping mouth, and we both murmured the formula, from God he came and to God he returneth; peace be with him!

"By this time, the sub-assistant surgeon had come and attended to the others. He said they'd all have to be carried to the hospital; meanwhile their statements could be roorded. With moans and tears they all, three Hindus and two Muslims, said they had no idea what the fight-





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ing was all about and why it had started. They had just been swept up in a frenzy and had fought and killed. They were really very sorry. They were put upon borrowed charpais and carried to the hospital by some of the local bazar people, who now that the storm had swept past, emerged from some of the hiding-places they had taken refuge in.

"Meanwhile the subedar had returned. He reported he had found twenty-five freshly-killed corpses lying around the bazar and one man, badly-wounded but still alive. The Sub-inspector of Police was lying in his chair at the station, stabbed through the heart, and his Head-constable's head had been separated from his body. Of the constables, he had seen no signs. Good God, said I, this is all too terrible. But why, in Heaven's name, why? What caused all this? And turning to the subedar 'will you please take us to the man who's still alive?'

"At the far end of the bazar we found him, a handsome young fellow, fashionably dressed. He was obviously in great distress but after being attended to, said he would like to make his dying declaration. His story was that feeling in the mood for some entertainment, he had decided to visit the beautiful and attractive Janaki Bai, the best singer and companion in that city famous for its music and companionship. Having filled his wallet with gold pieces, he had arrived at the lady's house. When he asked for her company, he was told she was resting in the underground cool chamber and could not be disturbed. He suggested, displaying his well-filled purse that he might also be allowed into the chamber and was turned down with contumely. She was not available that evening and for quite some days to follow. This led to hard words on both sides. 'What,' said the major-domo, 'you flaunt about your miserable few pieces of gold. Why she gets two hundred ashrafis for a few hours from that magnificent Hindu banker. Get out now, you dirty Muslim peasant'. At this, he had drawn his dagger and threatened the man, whereupon the fellow and his companions had fallen upon him, stabbed him in the back and thrown him out. As he lay there, he had called out Oh Muslims, the Hindus have killed me, whereupon there had been a great rushing-around of feet. He had been stabbed again and had become unconscious. Now he was glad to tell his tale before he closed his eyes for ever. Pribhdas and I looked and wondered. From this small beginning the whole damned affair had started. Janaki Bai's house we found utterly sacked. (Janaki herself we found out much later had taken refuge in a garden in the countryside, where the mali bedded her in such right earnest that she bore him three sons and gave up all pretensions to fashion and entertainment).

"It was now getting to be late in the evening. The bodies of the dead had to be disposed of. I ordered a list to be made of all of them, stating next of kin, wherever possible, and decided that since they had all been clearly killed in the riot, individual inquests would be a task of superrogation, and each body should be handed over to its family. Soon only three or four were left. These went to the dead house attached to the hospital. Followed a visit to the hospital to see how the wounded were faring, then at last to the bungalow, having placed the relief prison



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guard on duty in the town for the night, in the absence of the local police. The subedar and his gallant six stood on attention at the bungalow door. Shaking hands with each one of them, I thanked them warmly, told them I would send their department a special report, commending their superb courage and devotion to duty, and recommending them for special promotion. Saying to the Nayak please see that they are well fed before they leave, I went into the house, and relaxed in the big leather chair in the drawing room, sipping the long yellow cool drink, Dhanji the butler had brought in.

"Looking up, I saw Pribhdas at the door, 'Come in please, Pribhdasji,' I said, 'and sit down. Anything still remaining to be done?' 'No, sir, special promotion. Saying to the Naik please see that they are well fed missioner and the District Magistrate at the earliest moment: There's a train that leaves here for the divisional headquarters at 4 a.m. and the D. M. is there too, so if they are ready before then, they can be in the senior officers' hands by 11 a.m.' 'Oh dear, oh dear,' said I. How pleasant it would have been to just slip into bed, and sleep and sleep until the morning: but no clearly there's no rest for the wicked. All right they'll be ready, signed and sealed by 3.15. Have a messenger ready to carry them.' 'And, sir, if I may make a further suggestion, a carbon copy will not do for the D. M. That too must be freshly written in fair hand. Sorry, I or the Head Clerk can't help in this matter. Your handwriting alone will do.' I looked at the old man, sow how tired he was, and said 'so it shall be, Pribhdasji. And now thank you very much for all that you have done today, go and rest and eat. goodnight.' I then stood under a shower, ate such cool fruit as I could, went up to the flat roof, and saying please remember to wake me at midnight, fell sound asleep on the single mat matress.

"Awakened at midnight with a fragrant sup of the best Darjeeling, I drafted the report, faired it for the Commissioner, made some changes in the draft, making it more in line with the D. M.'s more detailed knowledge of the place and people, added a table of figures, cartridges fired, etc., faired it for the D. M., pushed both into their envelopes, handed them over to the Naik for closing and sealing, with when he had done and handed them over to the messenger, said 'Tell me, Mahomed Khan, are you not glad this riot is over and done with?' 'Yes, sir,' he said 'and my best congratulations.' 'What for?' I said. 'For meeting it like the man we thought you were. A difficult test, very satisfactorily passed, sir. Some more tea, perhaps?'" The old man smiled to himself at the thought of the wetness that had bedimmed his eyes that early morning of half-a-century ago.

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#### VISIBILITY UNLIMITED

#### **NERGIS DALAL**

O NE of the major problems we face in education today, is the difficulty in encouraging children to develop enquiring minds. Routine, rigid schedules, piles of mechanical homework and classes so large that individual attention becomes an impossibility, all work together to discourage an attitude of intelligent enquiry. Basically all educationists agree, it is not the absence of brain power that causes failure, but the absence of interest, intellectual hunger, motivation and drive.

A noted educationist claims, "The weather report for the adventure of learning should be *Visibility Unlimited*". The purpose of all education at the lowest level is to teach people to be literate. At the higher level it should aim to produce trained minds which strive for emotional maturity, spiritual insight, character and integrity.

The Americans have a term in their educational system called 'functional literacy'. High school graduates are considered to be functionally literate if they can read and understand all the instructions that come when a person buys a new gadget—refrigerator, TV set, toaster or washing machine. By this criteria, nearly 20 million adult Americans are considered not functionally literate!

In this country there would probably be the same number of college graduates who might be considered functionally illiterate in English, the language of instruction. This is, of course, our special problem. How to retain English, which after all is part of our heritage, and the chief language of more countries than any other language in the world, and yet provide instruction which is comprehensible to millions to whom English is as foreign as French, German or Russian.

The three-language formula, so successfully practised all over Europe, seems to have petered out in this country for lack of a sensible long-term policy and an even greater lack of good and competent teachers.

We have all encountered foreign experts and their wives, who speak English fluently (if accented) in addition to their own languages, because they have learnt it in school. Why is it not possible to do this here as well? Although, numerically, there are many more Hindi and Chinese speakers in the world today—these languages are confined to one particular area. English, on the other hand is an universal language. There are three times as many students of English in France as there are of German; and four times as many students of English in Germany as of French. It would be a pity to lose the advantage we have of knowing English, which is so important at the international level.

With Visibility Unlimited as the goal, basic education must teach children how to see and hear, how to speak and think, how to read and how to express themselves in written form and how to master the use of numbers. As experience and knowledge

deepen, the student should become more skilled in speech, more accurate in observation and analysis, and more capable of handling general and abstract ideas. He must learn to be critical of errors in logic and intellectual inquiry and develop a deep and abiding interest in reading good books, so that his "isolated mind comes to grips with the genius of the human race." In its most comprehensive sense, education leads to emotional maturity. It is the process of growing up into freedom, since only the mature can be really free.

Unfortunately, if we look around us at the men and women in power today, they seem, sadly, less than mature. We are treated to the spectacle of adults in high places with the manners and moods of children, and with habits that are appropriate only to the very early years. Impulsive reactions should, with the achievement of maturity, give way to informed, accurate and deliberate actions.

Reflective and analytical minds look for the premise as well as the structure of the argument, evaluating opposing theses with cool dispassion Education forces us to seek facts in their entirety and not only those which lie on the surface. An ever-widening range of curiosity, is also the mark of an educated mind. The specialist is only half-educated.

Dr. Paul Hurd of Stanford University claims that the difference between a developed society and an underdeveloped society, is more or less represented by the amount of scientific and other information that a country can marshal to focus on its own problems, in order to improve the quality of life. The use of the trained mind and the cultivation of intellectual interests, affects the nature and quality of all human life. The knowledge of advanced sciences and skills can be brought to bear on long-standing problems in order to benefit society in general. Education then, improved life at every level, if it is education in the real sense of the word. It is a process that must continue all through life since powers of judgment and junderstanding are not fully developed in youth. Provide trained, enquiring minds and all the rest follows.

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